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A compassionate plea
for infants

by
Joseph Stokes





A Compassionate Plea for Infants :

O R,

Remarks on Dr. Gale's Reflections
on Mr. Wall's History of Infant-Baptism;
in three Letters to Dr. Gale. By Joseph Stiles,
Minister at Northampton, New-England. Romans. 10. 2.
Phil. 1. 9, 10. LETTER I. 1717.

S I R,



A D I seen your Reflections on Mr. Wall, soon enough; I might have publish'd my Remarks, in my * Survey of Infant-Baptism: But since it has happen'd otherwise, I hope you will excuse my frequent References to that, to spare me the Pains of Transcribing.

I intend not to plead for every Thing Mr. Wall has advanc'd, nor to animadvert on all your Reflections; but to set this unhappy Controversy, in the best Light I am able.

'Tis convenient, before I enter on the general Debate, to take Notice of some warm Passages in your Second Letter.

* 'Tis

* 'Tis, you say, of the Effence of Baptism, that the Person be adult and dipped.

There is nothing more fatal or sinful in the Management of a Controversy, than the running Matters to an Extream, and unnecessarily crowding Circumstances into the Effence of a Thing: This is the ready Way to alienate Affections, and perpetuate the Controversy.

And you especially ought to have been very cautious, and not presum'd to let such a Passage as this come from you, without clear Authority from God's Word; for what is it in Effect, but asserting, that the greatest Number of pious *Christians*, in this and many Ages, have liv'd and dy'd without the Sacrament of Baptism?

Before an Article of this Importance had been brought into your Creed, you ought certainly to have assign'd a better Reason for it, than saying, ** That for you and your Parry, to grant ours a sufficient Baptism, wou'd be acknowledging Two Baptisms, against the exprefs Declaration of the Apostle, *Ephes. 4. 5. One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.*

I don't see, Sir, why this Text shou'd teach you to deny our Baptism, any more than it teaches us to deny yours; for 'tis but assuming a little of your Warmth and Assurance, and we can unbaptize you all by saying, That for us to grant yours a sufficient Baptism, would be acknowledging Two Baptisms, against the exprefs Declaration of the Apostle, that there is only *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.*

Besides, you could not have built such an uncharitable Notion upon a more improper Text, than this; for 'tis plain from the preceeding Verses, that the very Design of the Apostle's mentioning it, was to unite, and not to divide *Christians*. The Apostle also says, there is but *One Faith*, and must all be *Infidels*, therefore that don't jump exactly with you, in their *Credenda*? If different Circumstances of Faith may consist with *One Faith*, why may not your Baptism and ours pass for One, notwithstanding the different Circumstances?

But, finally to determine this Point, let *Exod. 4. 24, 25, 26.* be impartially weigh'd. *And it came to pass, by the Way in the Inn, that the Lord met him, (i. e. Moses) and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp Stone, and cut off the Fore-skin of her Son; and cast it at his Feet, and said, Surely a bloody Husband art thou to me. So he let him*

him go---- The Circumstances of Adminiftring this Sacrament, were more irregular than ours can be fuppos'd to be; for,

1. Suppose we devote our Children too foon to God, yet this is more excufable than *Moses's* doing this too late. If a Law fhould be made, that Parents fhould bring their Children exactly at Sixteen Years of Age, to fwear Fidelity to King GEORGE; which would be more unacceptable to his Majesty, the bringing them feveral Years before that Age, or the deferring it till feveral Years after? Now the latter of thefe, with Refpect to God, *Moses* was guilty of; for he had been Forty Years in *Midian*, and was now Eighty Years of Age, as appears from *Acts* 7. 23, compar'd with *v.* 30. and confequently his Son was not very Young when circumcis'd.

2. What *Moses* did in this Cafe, was contrary to his Light and Knowledge; for the Order to circumcife at Eight Days old, was deliver'd (*Gen.* 17. 12) in fuch plain and exprefs Terms, as to leave no Room for *Moses* to fuppose it might be pofpon'd: But if we baptife our Children earlier, and with another Mode than God requires, 'tis as *Gen.* 20. 5. in the Integrity of our Hearts, and Innocency of our Hands: For we find an Order in the *Old Testament*, that Infants fhould have the Seal of the Covenant, and the *New Testament* has no Intimation of its Repeal: Nay, it invites us to believe that 'tis not repeal'd; for it acquaints us, that *Christ* has a great Esteem for the Children of Believers; and has added new Privileges to the *Christian Church*; and confequently never meant to take away from them that ancient and valuable Privilege of their Childrens receiving the Seal of the Covenant. By thefe and other Hints, does the *New Testament* invite us to believe, that this Order was never repeal'd, but is as much in Force as ever. And then as to the Mode of Baptifm, we are not fatisfy'd, that Immersion was practis'd by the *Apostles* in *Judea*, and lefs ftill that *Christ* fhould expect it from us, whom Providence has caft into a colder Climate, where we cannot praftife it, but we muft run counter to his fuperior Order, *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.*

3. Another Circumftance of this Circumcifion was, that neither of the Parents intended it at this Time, but were frighted into a Compliance by the Lord's meeting *Moses* in the Inn, and feeking to kill him, becaufe he had not cir-

circumcis'd his Son. Obedience when extorted, is nothing near so delightful to God, as that which we are prompted to by our own Inclination.

4. 'Twas *Zipporah* officiated on this Occasion. Suppose therefore our Mode of Baptism is irregular, yet this Step of her's was, I humbly conceive, more irregular; for we make Use of the same Element as is requir'd; but her Sex was quite different from that which God appointed to administer Circumcision.* See *Gen. 17. Chap.*

Thus were there several Circumstances in this Circumcision more irregular than ours can be suppos'd to be in Baptism. And did the Lord therefore make a meer Cyphre, and Nullity of it? No, for 'tis said in *v. 26. So the Lord let him (Moses) go.* The Lord distinguish'd between the irregular Circumstances, and the Essence of Circumcision; and tho' he cou'd not approve of the Former, yet he was more gracious than to reject and disown the Latter: Which, compar'd with your Treatment of us, confirms the Prudence of *David's* Choice, *2 Sam. 24. 14. Let us fall now into the Hand of the Lord, (for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the Hand of Man.*

The other warm Passages I would note, are your saying * *That none can be true Members of the Christian Church, unless they are first taught, and then baptis'd by Dipping 'em into the Water. And that all others have no Title to Church-Membership, but shou'd be disclaim'd.*

'Twould in my Opinion, have been more commendable if at least some of the Charity you express for the *Heathens*, had been reserv'd for us. † As you open'd the Gate of Heaven to them, 'twas unkind to shut the Church Door against us. What, tho' they are not engag'd against you, as we in the Controversy of Baptism, yet this Partiality ought not to have been the Resentment. The Scriptures and not Passion, should have had the Ascendant, and dictated to you. Now how easily could I turn you to *Acts 26. 18. Rom. 10. 13, 14. 1 Thes. 2. 16.* and many other Texts, which seem to exclude the *Heathens* from Heaven? But what Passage is there in all the Sacred Passages which oblige you to exclude your Fellow-*Christians* from the Church?

There is nothing else wanting to cure you of this Splenetick, Unchurching, Disclaiming Humour, than some Portion of King *Hezekiah's*, and the Apostle *Paul's* Spirit. What

What Manner of Spirit this pious King was of, you may read, 2 Chron. 30. 18, 19. *For a Multitude of the People, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves; yet did they eat the Passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon every One that prepareth his Heart to seek God, the Lord God of his Fathers, tho' he be not cleansed according to the Purification of the Sanctuary.*

How different was this Behaviour from yours! *Hezekiah* did not disclaim the sincere *Israelites*; nor exclude them from the Passover; but intreated God to pardon their imperfect Preparation for that Sacrament. And this was no rash Pity, but what the Lord approv'd of; for 'tis immediately added, *And the Lord hearken'd to Hezekiah, and healed the People.*

The Apostle *Paul*, was also of the same Spirit, 1 Cor. 3. 1, &c. *And I, Brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal, even as unto Babes in Christ. I have fed you with Milk, and not with Meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: For whereas there is among you Envyng, and Strife, and Divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as Men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?*

In which there is observable,

That tho' the *Corinthians* were such as the Apostle could not speak unto as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal, even as unto Babes in Christ; yet,

1. He stiles them Brethren. He did not renounce all Christian Relation to them, because they were not of the same Growth in Religion as himself.

2. He dealt tenderly with them. He did not impose Terms of Communion, which their weak Stomachs could not digest. He did not set Meat before them, and tell them they must eat that or starve: No, but he fed them with Milk, and not with Meat: He acquiesc'd in their Belief of easy plain Truths, till they were able to apprehend the more difficult and abstruse.

Why then may not we be own'd as weaker Brethren at least? And why must your Baptism be cramm'd down our Throats, or else we not taste of the Lord's Supper?

There is farther observable in this Text, that the Apostle argues from the Envyng, and Strife, and Divisions, that were among his *Corinthians*, one saying, I am of *Paul*, and an-

another, I am of *Apollos*, that they were Carnal, and walk'd as Men.

Admire not yourselves therefore, for having a *Shibboleth* to distinguish your Party; and let us have some better Evidence of your being Spiritual, and walking as *Christians*, than saying, I am a *Baptist*, I am for Believers Baptism, I am for Dipping; for the Apostle has taught us that such distinguishing Marks and Clamours are an Argument of your being Carnal, and walking as Men.

But the Apostle not only in this Text, but elsewhere discovers the same condescending Spirit, and recommends it to all Christians, *Rom. 14. 1. Him that is weak in the Faith receive you, but not to doubtful Disputations.* Is not this the very Reverse of your Practice? You won't receive us as *Christians*, but you will even compel us to be present at your doubtful Disputations; for how common is it for your Visits to be spent in Controversy? Alas! how often have those nobler and more profitable Themes, the unsearchable Riches of Christ, the Beauties of Holiness, and the Joys of Heaven, been forc'd to lacquey to the Disputes of Baptism! But, if the Apostle can be heard, you must receive us as *Christians*, and not receive us to doubtful Disputations. This was a Subject the Apostle was so taken with, and so desirous of impressing on our Minds, that he continues it thro' this 14th *Chap.* and begins his next with saying, *We then that are strong ought to bear the Infirmities of the Weak, and not to please ourselves.* And urging this very closely in the subsequent Verses, he concludes with these melting Expressions at *v. 7. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the Glory of God.*

This was the Spirit of King *Hezekiah*, and the Apostle *Paul*; this is that Spirit the Scriptures recommend, this is the Spirit you want, and till you get it, we must say, as our Lord on another Occasion, *you know not what manner of Spirit you are of.*

Hitherto I have proceeded on the Supposition, that the Mistakes of Baptism were on our Side: But let us now enter upon the Scrutiny, on which side they really are.

You say at the Beginning of your Third Letter, That as the Controversy stands between you and us, it may be cast under Two Heads: One relating to the Mode of Baptism; whether it is to be administred only by Dipping: And the other (which must be handl'd more fully) is, who are the true Subjects of it; whether adult Persons alone, or Infants also. But before these Heads are directly treated on, you

artfully endeavour to prepossess your Reader, by insinuating, that,

“ 1. One would wonder a Thing of this Nature should be capable of so much Dispute : For if it is not instituted, it ought not to be practis'd ; and if it be instituted, it should seem impossible for any not to see it-----

“ 2. Our Enemies allow, that as far as the Scriptures are clear in the present Case, our Practice exactly agrees with 'em----

The former of these Insinuations is invidious, and by a Periphrasis represents us as Knaves or Fools ; and this is not the only Place where you sily pass the same Compliment upon us: But blessed be God, that the judicious Writings, and pious Lives among us, will easily wipe off this Aspersi-on. And as these are more common with us, than with you, according to your Way of arguing, your Baptism is not instituted, nor ought to be practis'd ; for if it should seem impossible for any not to see it, if it be instituted, it should much rather seem impossible for the far greatest Part of judicious and pious *Christians* not to see it:

As to the latter thing you insinuate ; 'tis a Concession I never met with, as I remember, in any of our Side. If you can name such, they have either unwarily express'd themselves, or they did very ill to oppose you. For my own part, I wou'd throw away my Pen this Minute, and submit to your Baptism, were I satisfied, That as far as the Scriptures are clear in the present Case, your Practice exactly agrees with 'em.

But, to be free with you, Sir, my present Thoughts are; That your Practice of Dipping is Antisciptural ; for it don't appear in Scripture, that any were Dipt ; or if this cou'd be made out, yet *Mat. 12. 7.* is a Prohibition of this in our Part of the World, where Health and Life wou'd be expos'd.

Nor are my present Thoughts of your Practice of Bap^z rizing the Adult at all more favourable ; for I take it to be of Humane Invention, and my Reason is, because I cannot find one Precept, nor Instance, nor just Consequence in the Sacred Records, which favours you. There are, I know, several Texts you commonly quote on this Occasion, such as *Mat. 3. 6. Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 16. Acts 8. 12.* But those Texts are nothing to your Purpose ; for 'tis certain, they expressly speak only of Persons who were converted while Adult from *Judaism* or *Gentilism* ; and when we are

concerned with such, we make Repentance and Faith the previous Terms of Baptism: So that as far as the Scriptures are clear in the present Case, our Practice exactly agrees with 'em. But where, in these Texts, or any other part of the Bible, is there the least Hint of baptizing Persons Adult, who were Born after their Parents had embrac'd Christianity? And yet this is your Baptism; and 'tis this you ought to justify by some Precept, Instance, or just Consequence in Scripture, and not put us off with Texts that relate to the Baptism of *Jews* or *Heathen*. What is this, in effect, but to equivocate, and alter the Terms of the Dispute? Wou'd it be fair to argue from its being said, *Acts 22. 28.* That the Chief Captain was made free when Adult, and *with a great Sum obtained this Freedom*, that the Apostle Paul was not *Free Born*? And wou'd not you smile, if a Party of our modern *Jews* shou'd separate from their Body, and set up Adult-Circumcision, and, to support the Fancy, shou'd produce all the Texts in the Old Testament, which speak of Adult-Circumcision? Pray excuse us therefore, if we insist upon some solider Proof of your Baptism, than Texts which speak of the Baptism of *Jews* and *Heathen*; for what is this to the Infants of Christian Parents?

But 'tis time, Sir, to leave your Exordium, and more distinctly observe your management of the controverted Points.

The first Thing you propose to treat of is, the Mode of Baptism: And you assert, * *It should be only by Immersion.*

The Arguments you produce are,

I. That in all Authors, both Sacred and Prophane, βαπτισ and βαπτίζω have no other signification but to Dip.

II. The Practice of *John* the Baptist, Christ, and his Apostles.

III. The Practice of the Primitive Church.

IV. The Determination of Learned Moderns.

These Arguments are enough, and more than enough, if they can be fairly made out to favour you: But your Reflections have not done this.

As to the Signification of the Greek Words in Debate; your own Book confutes your Assertion of their signifying only to Dip; for you give us several Instances where you confess they cannot signify to Dip. And speaking of one of these Instances, you tell us, * That the Word βαπτίζω, perhaps, does not so necessarily express the Action of putting

ring under Water, as in general a Things being in that Condition; no matter how it comes so, whether it is put into the Water, or the Water comes over it; tho' indeed, to put it into the Water is the most natural way, and the most common, and is therefore usually and almost constantly, but it may be not necessarily imply'd.

Your Medium to reconcile these Contradictions is, That the Greek Words are here used Figuratively, and the Authors alluded to the Dyers colouring of things by Dipping them in the Dye; and that the Extravagance of the Expression must be qualified by *ὡςπερ ὄσσει* understood.

But this Solution is not able to extricate you; for 'tis Arbitrary, and destructive to your Cause. 'Tis Arbitrary; for 'tis a Question whether they who used these Greek Words were so far acquainted with the Dyers Art, as to know that they dipt things to Dye them; or if they were, it don't follow that they must in these Places allude to it; for how often do we use the word Dye without ever alluding to the Dyers Art? But the Solution is not only Arbitrary, but also Destructive to your Cause; for don't it equally warrant us to plead, That as our Lord's Expressions in the other Sacrament were to be taken Figuratively, so the Word Baptize must be taken in this, and the Qualifying Adverb *ὡςπερ* be understood? Nor is your * Evasion of the Passage you cite from *Aristotle* considerable; for 'tis no matter whether that Coast was wholly, or in part cover'd with the Tide, 'tis enough that *βαπτίζω* there signifies to Pour, and not to Dip; for you more than once grant, † That being totally Immers'd does not affect our Dispute; for the Question is not about the Whole, or a Part of the Subject, but whether the Greek Word signifies only to Dip or any thing else.

I cannot but here observe what an Unhappiness it is to imbibe an Error; for this leads us into a Labyrinth. The Passages you cite are plain and easie, if you will but admit, that the Greek Words in Dispute, like several others, have various Acceptations: But by confining them only to Dip, you occasion your self a World of Trouble, and after all cannot extricate your self; tho' no Man could discover more Inclination; for you make *Mahomet* go to the Mountain, when you perceive that won't come to him: 'Tis a

Maxim with you, that βαπτίζω signifies only to Dip; but because 'twould be absurd to say the Coast was Dipt, therefore you drop your Maxim, and very gravely tell us, That the Word perhaps does not so necessarily express the Action of putting under Water, as in general a Thing's being in that Condition, no matter how it comes so, &c.

How these Expressions, with the other I just hinted about the Whole, or the Part, will be relish'd by your Parry, I cannot determine: But were I sure they wou'd approve of them, and act accordingly, I might here close the Dispute about the Mode of Baptism.

But however, lest they should not, 'tis convenient to trace you farther.

In your Fourth Letter you Appeal to the Criticks to determine the Sense of βαπτίζω. But two of the six you cite, viz. Constantine and Stephens, you * confess, don't think it signifies only to Dip: and how many other Criticks be of the same Mind? Besides, the Instances you have quoted do invalidate all the Criticks can say of its signifying only to Dip; for Criticks are of no Note where Authors are manifestly against 'em.

You next † present us with the *Septuagint*, and *Apocrypha*.

But I have that to object against their Authority which you frequently do against our Quotations of the Fathers, viz. That the present Editions are so corrupt, that we cannot be certain whether the Words in dispute were in the Original Editions.

I have also farther to object, That you take it for granted βαπτω and βαπτίζω are used by these Authors, as Synonymous Terms; whereas, of the Twenty five Places you say you have met with these Words, four only have βαπτίζω, and 'tis a question whether in any of them it signifies to Dip. The first Place is 2 Kings 5. 14. Our Translation has, *Dipped himself Seven Times*: But, with submission, I conceive it might better have been translated, *Then went he down, and washed Seven Times in Jordan*.

My Reason is, because what was here done by Naaman is said to be according to the Saying of the Man of God: Now the 10. ver. informs us, that was, *Go and wash in Jordan Seven Times*.

Indeed you ‡ pretend that מצו and שׁוּב signify only to Dip: But if you read Gen. 43. 31. not to turn you to

more,

more, you may see you are mistaken as to the former; and the Text we are upon seems to intimate you are mistaken in the latter; for the Leprosie of *Naaman* seems from *v. 11.* to be only in one little part of his Body, and that visible. And therefore *Elisha's* Order might be like that of our Lord's to the Blind Man, *John 9. 7.* Go wash in the Pool of *Siloam.* i. e. Take some Water out of the Pool with your Hand, and wash off the Clay from your Eyes. So here, Take some Water out of *Jordan,* and wash the Leprous Place Seven Times.

And that which may farther incline us to think this is the true Sense of this Text is, because there was an Order *Lev. 14. 7.* That the Leper who was to be cleansed, should be sprinkled upon Seven Times. 'Tis true, the Circumstances between that Order and *Elisha's* are different; but that might be occasion'd by *Naaman's* being an *Heathen.*

The next Place you refer to is *Judith 12. 8.* And that *Judith* did not dip herself, is plain from the 7th Chapter of the same Book; for as all the Fountains of Waters had a Guard of Soldiers attending Night and Day, lest the Besieg'd should get any Water, *Judith* wou'd never dip herself.

Ecclesiasticus 34. 26. is the last Place in the *Apocrypha* you mention. The Words are (* you say) in your Translation; *he that washeth himself because of a dead Body, and toucheth it again, what availeth his Washing?*

The Washing here alluded to, is that which the Law enjoy'd, *Numb. 19. 9, 18.*

That Sprinkling was one Part of the Purification, you cannot deny; but Bathing the Body, you fancy, was another, and the principal Part, and 'tis to that therefore you suppose the Words refer. But, Sir, with your Leave, the Sprinkling was the principal Part of the Purification; for the Sprinkling is call'd the Purification for Sin, *v. 9, 17.* The unclean Person is threatned, *v. 13, 20.* to be cut off from *Israel:* For what? for not Bathing himself? No, but because the Water of Separation was not sprinkled upon him. And the Apostle, *Heb. 9. 13.* mentions only Sprinkling. So that, according to your own Way of arguing, Sprinkling being the principal Part of this Purification, βαπτισμῶν more immediately refers to Sprinkling.

The next Evidence you produce, is the *New Testament;* but I am sorry you should represent it † as unreasonable

to

to make this the best Interpreter of the Word Baptize, or βαπτίζω as used in itself.

Speech is, * you confess, continually altering, and depends upon Custom. And to understand what you mean by *Pædobaptists* in your Book, shall I turn over *Homer, Pindar, Aristophanes, &c.* or consider in what Sense 'tis taken in your Book? Would it not be absurd to collect Passages out of these *Greek Poets* of βαπτίω or βαπτίζω signifying to dip, and thence infer, that by *Pædobaptists*, you mean such as dip Infants into the Water?

'Tis plain therefore, that nothing can so well explain this Controversy as the *New Testament* itself.

Now there is not one Place in the *New Testament*, where βαπτίζω does evidently signify to dip; for in all such Places βαπτίω is us'd. And 'tis observable, that tho' *Judas's* Dipping his Hand with our Lord in the Dish, is related by Three of the Evangelists, and in somewhat different Expressions, yet they all agree in βαπτίω to dip: Which intimates, that whatever these two *Greek Words* may be in other Authors, yet in the *New Testament*, they are not Synonymous.

You pretend † That *Mark 7. 3.* unless they wash πουςῶν up to the Elbow, or Wrist, must imply Dipping. Pray read ‡ *Godwin's Moses and Aaron*, or go to the *Portuguese Synagogue*, and observe how they wash before they enter the Synagogue, at a Cock just before the Gate, and see your Criticism confuted.

Your †† Animadversion on Mr. *Wall's* Interpretation of *Mark 7. 4.* is not fair; for *Lev. 11. 32.* may perhaps only intimate, that such Things should be wash'd with Water; for some of the Vessels might be too large to remove and put into the Water. Besides, *Lev. 11. 32.* speaks of a Purification which God commanded; and was when a Thing was polluted by some unclean creeping Thing falling on it, when Dead: But *Mark 7. 4.* speaks of an Humane Invention; and upon I don't know what Occasion.

You also will have it, § That the Washing mention'd *Mark 7. 4.* When they came from Market, was Dipping themselves all over. Dr. *Pocock*, as you observe, denies this, and calls in the whole Body of *Rabbins* to his Assistance. Against which you oppose the Opinion of *Vatablus* and *Grotius*, as if they were better acquainted than the *Rabbins*,
with

with the *Jewish* Customs. Nor is *Lev. 22. 6.* an Explication of this Text; for that is a Command of God, this a Tradition of the Elders; that refers to the Sons of *Aaron*, this to all the *Jews*; that respects the Eating of Holy Things, this common Meals. *The Constitutions, Josephus, &c.* are also nothing to your Purpose; for they mean a particular Sect; whereas *St. Mark* speaks of all the *Jews*, as is plain from the 3. v.

You assert * That the Washing the Hands cannot be intended in the 4. v. because 'tis mention'd in the 3. v. But why not, Sir, since 'tis common, first to mention Things in general, and then give a particular Instance; especially, when, as in this Case, the Instance will help us to form clearer Ideas of the Thing?

The Last Text you urge of this Nature, is *Heb. 9. 10.* Which † you say has no Allusion to the Sprinklings under the Law. But as the following Verses seem to be explicatory of this, and mention divers Sprinklings, without a Syllable of Dipping, we have more Reason to conclude these Sprinklings are meant by divers Washings. Nor is it harsh, as you ‡ suggest, to call Sprinkling, Washing; for *Luke 7. 44.* *Mary wash'd Christ's Feet with her Tears, and were not those Tears distill'd or sprinkl'd on Christ's Feet?*

What now can be said of these Texts out of the *New Testament*, but that they are rather against you, than in your Favour?

But to close this Head, the Apostle *Paul* certainly understood the Signification of βαπτίζω, and he uses it, not to dip, but to sprinkle or pour, in *1 Cor. 10. 2.* *And were all baptiz'd unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea.* The Apostle refers to the *Israelites* Passage thro' the *Red-Sea*, when they fled from *Pharaoh*; for in their Passage the Cloud 'tis probable distill'd upon them, and the strong *East Wind* which then blew (*Exod. 14. 21.*) might sprinkle them with some of the *Red-Sea* Water, from the Top of the Surges, mention'd v. 22. and therefore the Preposition εἰς should be translated with, as 'tis frequently elsewhere, particularly *Mat. 3. 11.*

But I shall add no more here, concerning the Use of the Word βαπτίζω in the *New Testament*, because what I have farther to say, may more fitly be brought in when I consider your next Argument for Dipping, which I now proceed to.

2. You

2. You appeal to the Practice of *John the Baptist*, and the Apostles.

The Texts you cite on this Occasion, I have taken Notice of, in my * *Survey*. But here let me add, that as to much Water, in *John* 3. 23. I desire you to read 2 *Chron.* 32. 4. *So there was gather'd much People together, who stopped all the Fountains, and the Brook that ran thro' the midst of the Land, saying, why should the Kings of Assyria come and find much Water?*

Would it not be a curious Criticism to observe from the Mention of much Water here, That *Hezekiah* and his Subjects took all this Pains to prevent the *Assyrians* Dipping themselves? What Child but may give a truer Account of the Matter, and say, 'twas to prevent their having Water to drink? How can much Water therefore (*John* 3. 23.) be an Argument that *St. John* dip'd in Baptism? Let it but be consider'd how scarce Water was in many Parts of *Canaan*; how hot the Climate, and how numerous the Company attending on *John's* Ministry; and 'twill appear there was Need enough of much Water where *John* baptiz'd, not to dip his Followers, but refresh them.

As to *Mark* 1. 5. How common is it for Persons to go into a River without dipping themselves? And I have in my *Survey*, hinted at some Reasons why *St. John* might go into a River to baptize, tho' he did not dip. Besides, 'tis not evident, that *St. John* took his *Profelites* into the River; for this Passage, *were all baptiz'd of him in the River of Jordan*, may signify no more, than if any, speaking of the *Padobaptists*, should say, they baptize in a Font, or a Bason; which is not to be understood, that we baptize by dipping into the Font or Bason, but that we make use of the Water therein.

As to *Acts* 8. 38. It may note no more than that there was a Descent to the Water, like *Judges* 7. 4, 5. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, the People are yet too many: Bring them down unto the Water, and I will try them for thee there---* So he brought down the People unto the Water---- Now this was not to dip the People.

Besides, as I have observ'd in my *Survey*, suppose they both went into the Water, yet this don't prove that the *Eunuch* was dip'd; for *Philip* was not then dip'd; and yet as much is said of him as of the *Eunuch*, about going down into the Water, and coming up out of the Water. As

As to *Rom. 6. 4. Col. 2. 12.* 'tis only a Supposition, that the Mode of Baptism is alluded to, and we might as well urge *Ezek. 36. 25.* in favour of Sprinkling; for the Prophet refers to Gospel-Times; and why may not he allude to the Mode of Baptism in saying, *Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean?* This Conjecture is more probable than yours; for Baptism had been instituted and practis'd some Years before Christ's Burial; and 'tis farther observable, that the Burial and Resurrection the Apostle speaks of, was, thro' the Faith of the Operation of God, *Col. 2. 12.* But Persons may be dip'd, and yet not thus bury'd and risen again.

You see now, Sir, That these Texts don't make it out; that the Practice of St. *John* and the Apostles was Dipping.

But however, suppose these Texts and Ten Thousand more, had clearly represented to us, that their Practice was Dipping, yet this could be only understood of their more usual Practice, and not of what they did on extraordinary Occasions, such as Sickness, Distance from much Water, cold Climates, and the Inhabitants unaccustomed to Bathings. Somewhat I have said of this in my * *Survey*; and have nothing to do more, but to answer your two Objections.

One is, † That 'tis rash to suppose the Apostles, on extraordinary Occasions, alter'd the Mode. The other is, ‡ That *Mat. 12. 7.* won't justify our Sprinkling, if the Texts you produce favour Dipping.

As to the former; pray what Rashness is there in supposing, that the Apostles were baptiz'd, tho' the Scripture is silent? And their altering the Mode on extraordinary Occasions may as fairly be suppos'd; for did they make free with the 4th Commandment to refresh their Bodies, in a Case of Extremity, *Mat. 12. 1.* and wou'd they be more squeamish, in the like Case, to alter a Mode; that the Souls of their Converts might be refresh'd by Baptism?

As to your other Objection, that *Mat. 12. 7.* won't justify our Sprinkling, if the Texts you produce favour Dipping.

I answer, that 'tis said *Mat. 12. 4.* 'Twas lawful only for the Priests to eat the *Shew-bread.* And *Exod 20. 10.* *But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any Work.* Are any of your Texts so express as these?
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these? And yet these had tacit Exceptions of Cases of Necessity, as is evident from our Lord's pronouncing *David* and his Apostles innocent. *Mat. 12. 7.* And don't this prove, that all the Texts you bring, must at least have a tacit Exception? And consequently in our cold Climate, the Exception is pleadable, and our Sprinkling is justify'd by *Mat. 12. 7.*

* You pretend, that this Text will justify the not Administring Baptism at all, but not a varying the Mode, in Cases of Necessity. But how strange a Construction is this! If *David* and the Apostles had fasted, and our Lord had brought this Text to justify it, there had been then some Colour for what you say: But as *David* did eat the *Shew-Bread*, when he could get no other; and the Apostles pluck the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath-Day, rather than they would fast, and *Mat. 12. 7.* is brought to justify them; 'tis preposterous to say they will warrant our Omission of Baptism, but not excuse our varying of the Mode.

What you have advanc'd therefore, has neither prov'd, that Dipping was the Apostolical Practice; nor, if it had been, that in extraordinary Cases, another Mode is not lawful.

Permit me now to offer some Things which render it at least probable, that the Apostles never dip'd.

1. 'Tis certain, whatever some learned Men have fancy'd, the Apostles did not baptize naked. *Exod. 20. 26.* 'Tis said, *Neither shalt thou go up by Steps unto mine Altar, that thy Nakedness be not discover'd thereon.* And certainly to strip, and march naked into the Water, wou'd be as immodest. But without such Supposition, how could they be dip'd, who were baptiz'd? For they wou'd not care to be dip'd in their wearing Cloths, and in the Apostles Days, where could they have a Withdrawing-Room, and baptismal Garments?

2. The ancient Seal of the Covenant, Circumcision, was apply'd but to a Part of the Body.

3. 'Tis such a Thing as never was heard of, to have a Seal cover the Whole of the Writings which entitle us to an Estate: The Seal affix'd to a small Part is sufficient.

4. Our Mode does at least equally represent the End and Design of Baptism, and has none of the Inconveniences which attend Dipping, such as Fatigue and Temptation

tion in the Minister ; Dressing, and Undressing, Blushing, Confusion, Frights, and almost Suffocation in the Profelitte. But my intended Brevity requires me to consider the next Evidence you call, *viz.*

3. * The Practice of the Primitive *Christians*.

But as to this I object,

1. That, if I mistake not, *Tertullian* is the Antientest Authority that can be depended on, and that you † confess is not antient enough. Besides, Dr. *Beveridge* has produc'd a Passage out of him, in Favour of Sprinkling, and *cujuslibet Aquæ* is not, as you pretend, an invincible Bar against the Doctor's Construction ; for *cujuslibet* seems to be superfluous, if Water was not then sprinkled in Baptism. And, that earlier than *Novatian* Perfusion was, at least in extraordinary Cases, practis'd, is evident from what *Cornelius* his Rival in a Letter, as cited by ‡ *Du Pin*, says ; for he mentions a previous Order of the Church about it.

2. § You confess Innovations were very early brought into the Church, and as a Trine Immersion, Anointing the New-baptiz'd, and giving them Milk and Honey, &c: are usually mention'd in those earlier Days with Dipping, 'tis probable they are of the same Original.

3. The Antients at least in extraordinary Cases baptiz'd without Dipping.

This appears from the Order I just now took Notice of ; and you own ** That about the Middle of the third Century there is Mention made of Sprinkling. But you tell us, that what they did in Cases of Necessity won't warrant our general Practice ; and that even in such Cases the Validity of the Baptism was much question'd.

As to the Former of these, the same Principle on which they proceeded in Cases of Necessity will warrant our general Practice ; for in our Part of the World, 'tis dangerous making the Experiment whose Body can bear Dipping. If it be said, we must trust God in this Case, I refer you to my †† *Survey* for an Answer. And truly I don't find your own Ministers have a strong Faith in this Article ; for 'tis not every One will venture into the cold Water, but this Part of their Office is shifted off to some of their hardier Brethren.

* Page 190. † p. 206. ‡ Vol. 1. p. 144. Eccl. Hist. § p. 397, 398, 543. ** p. 207. †† p. 29, 30.

As to the Antients questioning the Validity of Clinical Baptisms;

I answer it seems rather to be from the Fears lest such Persons were not sincere Converts, than from any Scruple about the Mode; for because they desir'd Baptism in a Time of Health, and desir'd it on a sick Bed, when they despair'd of Life, there was Room for Suspicion. But none of the Antients carry'd this Matter so far as to rebaptize such. And *Cyprian* thinks the Scriptures are in Favour of Sprinkling, particularly *Numb* 19. 13. Nor is an Argument drawn from that Text so trifling as you represent; for if God himself appointed Sprinkling to be the Mode of Purification under the Law, can it be unpleasant to him, at least in extraordinary Cases, to use this in Baptismal Purification?

* You fancy *Cyprian* had some Scruples about this Mode, because in his Letter to *Magnus*, he leaves it to every One to think and act in the Case, as he should judge fit. But such a Way of Expression was usual with *Cyprian*, as *Du Pin* † observes, and the Apostle has recommended it, *Rom.* 14. *Chap.* to all *Christians*. And how happy would it be for the Church of Christ, if your Controversies were thus manag'd?

‡ You farther observe, that *Cyprian*, in this Dispute, is silent as to several Arguments now in Vogue. Your Design in this, is to render them contemptible: But if this Method will do it, I hope you will excuse us, if we compare your Reflections on Mr. *Wall's History of Infant-Baptism*, with what *Tertullian* says on the Subject, and slight all the Improvements you have made.

The Instance you bring of the Emperor § *Constantine*, can be but of little Service to you, because 'tis not early enough, and he was of a peculiar Temper, as appears from his Intention to be baptiz'd in *Jordan*, and Deferring his Baptism till Old Age. Besides, as he dy'd a few Days after his Baptism, 'tis not improbable but Dipping might increase his Sickness, and hasten his *Exit*.

There is one Argument more you use, and that is,
4. The Determination of learned Moderns.

But in such a Case as this, they are no farther to be regarded, than they can produce Authority for what they say. Besides; how few of the Learned will assert, that the
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Antients only dipp'd? And are they not almost unanimous, that Dipping is not necessary in our *Northern* Regions?

These, Sir, are the brief Remarks I thought fit to communicate to you, on that Part of your Book which relates to the Mode of Baptism: And, in my next, I design to consider the other Point in Debate, *viz.* Who are the true Subjects of Baptism; whether Adult Persons alone, or Infants also?

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

LETTER II.

S I R,

IN my Former I gave you my Thoughts, as to the Mode of Baptism: Permit me in this to do the same, as to the Subjects of Baptism.

'Tis my Opinion, that the first Thirteen Pages of your Sixth Letter might have been spar'd; for, Mr. *Wall* * you confess never meant to deny, that Infant-Baptism was in Scripture. He has Recourse to the Practice of the *Jews*, and the Primitive Church, to explain, not exclude the Scripture. In short, he had no other Design in this, than you had in turning us to the *Greek Authors*, to explain *Βαπτισμῶ* in the *New Testament*.

And truly the rest of your Sixth Letter is, what I cannot but complain of; for you unfairly state the Matter by Insinuating, † That our Argument is, Christ has no where forbid us to baptize our Children, and therefore we may do it: This is only to relate one, and conceal the other Part of our Argument; for what we insist on is, that, as the Infants of Professors once had, by Divine Authority, the initiating Seal of the Covenant, and Christ never repeal'd this by prohibiting their Initiation in the *Christian Church*, therefore we are oblig'd to baptize our Children.

Compare this Way of Arguing, with *Anthony's* Preaching to a Congregation of Fishes, and the like pretty Allusions you wou'd expose us by, and tell me who has discover-

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ed the greater Weakness. In our way of arguing we appeal to a Law which you own was made, and we believe was never repeal'd: And how are your Allusions pertinent, except you can make the same Appeal?

Your Seventh and Eighth Letters, are taken up about the Extent of *Mat. 28. 19.*

But I have to remark:

I. That what you say don't prove, that Children may not be included in *μαθητεύσαιτε.*

II. That suppose they are not included in it, yet that Word don't exclude them from Baptism.

III. That *Mat. 28. 19.* is more in our Favour than in yours.

1. That what you say don't prove, that Children may not be included in *μαθητεύσαιτε.*

Under the Law, when Parents were *profelited*, their Children were also deem'd *Profelites*; for they had immediately a Right to Circumcision; and the *Jewish* Writers, as Mr. *Wall* observes, * file Children *Profelites*, tho' the Etymology of this Word might as well be objected, as that in Dispute. And why then, under the Gospel, may not our Children be deem'd Disciples? What Confusion would it make in Books, and Conversation, if the Sense of Words were to be taken from their Etymology? And in particular, our School-Mistresses must not when ask'd, how many Scholars they have? reckon those that are yet too young to learn, but they are to be mention'd under some other Denomination.

When you can make it out, Sir, that our Children are not Disciples, I will confess your Etymology has some Weight in it; but till then, I may, I hope, entertain what Thoughts I please of it. And you are the more concern'd to make this out, because if our Children are Disciples, then *Mat. 28. 19.* is an exprefs Command for Infant-Baptism.

The next Remark is,

2. That suppose Children are not included in *μαθητεύσαιτε*, that yet this Word don't exclude them from Baptism.

See my † *Survey*, or rather peruse your Explication of *John 3. 5.* for the Distinction you use there, is applicable to *Mat. 28. 19.* And who can return a solidier Answer to what you advance, p. 248, 249. than that which you yourself

self have done, p. 420. In this Letter you tell us, that tho' such Texts as *John 3. 5.* speak in general, yet Infants cannot be excluded from Heaven by them; for the Conditions of Faith, and being born of the Spirit, must refer to the Adult, and not to Infants who are incapable of performing them. In this Case you allow that these Conditions, tho' mention'd in the same Verse with Salvation, and made Terms of it to the Adult, yet Infants are not concern'd with them, but may be saved without them, as being incapable of performing them. And is it fair then to argue from the Word *Teach*, in *Mat. 28. 19.* and the Incapacity of Infants to be taught, that therefore they are not to be baptiz'd? Why may it not here be said, that *Teach* is to be understood as a Term or Condition of Baptism only to the Adult?

My other Remark is,

3. That *Mat. 28. 19.* is more in our Favour than in yours.

This is evident, because you cannot deny but the Infants of Professors once had a Right to the initiating Seal; and when this Seal was exchange'd, there was no Bar put in against them by Christ, at least in our Opinion. But as to your Baptism, *viz.* of the Adult Seed of Professors, when, and where, shall we find it in God's Word? The Texts you commonly produce are, as I have already hinted, nothing to your Purpose, because they speak of Persons converted from Judaism, or Gentilism to Christianity, when Adult; and we strictly observe those Rules when we are to baptize such.

So that after all the Stir you have made about *Mat. 28. 19.* we have a better Claim to it than you; for the Old Commission to initiate did include Infants, and the New One having no Exception of them, is to be suppos'd equally extensive. But neither the Old or New Commission recommends your Subjects of Baptism.

Your *Ninth Letter* has several Objections against Mr. *Wall's* Argument for Infant-Baptism, that is fetch'd from the *Jews* Initiating both *Profelites* and their Infants by Baptism.

One of your Objections is, * That the Authorities Mr. *Wall* cites, are not ancient enough; for the *Mischna* was not compil'd till about One Hundred and Fifty Years after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

But,

But, Sir, with your Leave, this Authority is antient enough; for whatever Innovations have been made in the *Jewish* Religion since our Lord's Days, such is their Averfion to the *Christians*, that they would never have been beholden to them for an Innovation. If before our Lord's Institution of Baptism, as a Sacrament, the *Jews* were not us'd to initiate their *Profelites* by Baptism, they would have disdain'd to set up this Practice afterwards.

You again object, * That none of the *Jewish* Writings Mr. *Wall* cites, say any Thing of the *Jews* Baptizing their *Profelites* before or in our Saviour's Time.

The Solution I have given to the former Objection, will avail here: To which I must add, that your Memory fail'd you in saying, that none of the *Jewish* Writings Mr. *Wall* cites, say any thing of the *Jews* Baptizing their *Profelites* before our Saviour's Time; † for *Maimonides* is cited by him, as speaking of many *Profelites* being baptiz'd in *David's* and *Solomon's* Time; and the *Talmud*, as saying, that *Jethro*, *Moses's* Father in-Law, was made a *Profelite* by Circumcision and Baptism.

You farther object, ‡ That there is no Necessity to understand the *Mischna* in Mr. *Wall's* Sense.

But, Sir, the Commentaries on the *Mischna*, you confess, seem to favour him; and why must the *Jews* be suppos'd worse Interpreters of the *Mischna* than Dr. *Gale*? Besides, even your Interpretation is as favourable for us; for if the Native *Jews*, because of some Pollution, were baptiz'd, as well as circumcis'd, *Profelites* stood in more Need of such a Purification.

You next object, § That the Antiquity of the Practice is render'd dubious by the Disagreement of the *Rabbins*.

Is it Equity, Sir, to oppose Two Persons to a Cloud of Witnesses? And besides, those Two are misrepresented; for they no where expressly deny, that *Profelites* were initiated by Baptism: Nor do the Passages you mention, express any thing of this Nature; for they may ridicule our Sacrament of Baptism as an unaccountable and fanciful Ceremony, and yet approve of their own Baptizing of *Profelites*: Don't some of your Friends, nay, you yourself ridicule our Baptism? And must I infer, that you don't baptize your *Profelites*. But fully to convince you of this wrong Innuendo, the Baptizing of *Profelites* is in the *Talmud*, and you

you * tell us from *Naucleus*, that it is enjoy'd under Pain of Death, that no One presumé to deny any One Thing written in the *Talmud*, and consequently the Two *Jewish* Authors you refer to, did not deny this.

You also object, † That if the *Rabbins* had universally asserted in so many Words, that the *Jews* did always use to initiate their *Proselytes* by Baptism; and that St. *John* and Jesus Christ borrow'd the Ceremony from them, you should nevertheless think it the greatest Folly and Madness in the World, to believe it on their sole Authority.

But, Sir, this Objection can't concern us, because we don't believe this on the sole Authority of the *Rabbins*, as will appear by and by. Besides, suppose we did, the Reasons you assign, are not sufficient.

1. You say, the *Rabbinick* Writings have many Romances and Blasphemies.

But you give us no Instances of this in the *Mischna*; or if you had, 'twould not in this Case have invalidated the Testimony; for don't the *Classicks* abound with Romances and Blasphemies, and yet we credit their Account of the *Greek* and *Roman* Customs.

2. You say, several of the *Rabbins* were notoriously wicked; and, among other their Impieties, did corrupt and alter the Sacred Scriptures.

But, Sir, tho' our Lord charg'd the Scribes with corrupt Glosses, yet never with Corrupting the Text. 'Tis generally own'd by *Protestants*, that the *Jews* have always been solicitous to preserve the Original of the *Old Testament* pure and uncorrupt; and this appears from the indefatigable Pains of the *Massorites*. *Justin Martyr*, indeed, accuses them of Corrupting the Text; but the Reason is, he was only Conversant with the *Septuagint*, and the *Jews* declaring, that the *Hebrew* in some Places differ'd from that, he fancy'd they had corrupted the *Hebrew*: whereas the Errata were in the *Septuagint*.

Besides, what Proof is there, that the *Rabbins*, who mention the Baptism of *Proselytes*, were such impious Wretches? Or if this could be made out, yet don't we credit the worst of Persons in Cases where they are under no Temptation to deceive? What were the Morals of *Virgil*, *Ovid*, &c. and yet we readily acquiesce in the Account they give of the *Roman* Customs; and therefore the Evidence of the

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Rabbins in this Case is credible, because they rather lay under a Temptation of Blotting this Baptism out of their Writings, than falsely inserting it, as it seems to approach unto the Practice of the *Christians*, whom they detest.

3. You say, some learned Men speak contemptibly of the *Rabbins*.

Pray, Sir, read *Cartwright's* Epistle prefix'd to his Annotations on *Exodus*: and you will see his Opinion of the *Rabbins*, and that of the most learned Persons of his Time. And the famous Mr. *Hugh Broughton* * declares, the *Rabbins* are useful to understand both the *Old* and *New Testaments*, and he that cannot use them, should not translate.

Nay, the very Persons you quote, as speaking contemptibly of the *Rabbins*, do in this Case admit of their Authority. Dr. *Lightfoot* in particular has these Expressions, “ † If Baptism, says he, and baptizing Infants had been a new Thing, and unheard of till *John* the Baptist came, as Circumcision was, till God appointed it to *Abraham*, there would have been, no doubt, an express Command for Baptizing Infants, as there was for Circumcising 'em. But when the Baptizing of Infants was a Thing commonly known and used, as appears by uncontestable Evidence from their Writers; there need not be express Assertions that such and such Persons were to be the Objects of Baptism: When it was as well known, before the Gospel began, that Men, Women, and Children were baptiz'd, as it is to be known that the Sun is up, when, &c.

4. You say, That Christ and his Disciples give us the worst Character of the *Rabbins* and Governors of the *Jews* that 'tis possible to conceive. And that *Mark* 7. 8. reaches expressly the Thing in Dispute.

But, Sir, tho' our Lord and his Disciples gave them but a very indifferent Character, yet that is more favourable than you can vouchsafe them, and such an One as may invite us to listen to what they say in the present Case, *Mat.* 23. 1, 2, 3. Then spake Jesus to the Multitude, and to his Disciples, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses Seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, &c.

Nor does *Mark* 7. 8. reach expressly the Thing in Dispute; for the Washing of Pots and Cups, is only express'd
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* Page 700. Of his Works in Folio. † Harmony on John 1. 25.

in particular, And truly our Lord's not mentioning the Baptism of *Profelites* on this Occasion, is an Argument, that 'twas not a Tradition of the *Pharisees*, but a Divine Institution; for otherwise our Lord would rather have instanc'd in the Baptism of *Profelites*, than in the Washing of Pots and Cups, this being the bolder Step of the Two, as seeming to represent Circumcision as an imperfect Initiation.

You in your *Tenth Letter* undertake to prove, that there was no such Thing as Baptizing the *Jewish Profelites*.

The Arguments you use are,

1. * The Silence of the Scriptures.

But, Sir, is it not plain from *John* 1. 25. That the *Jews* had a Notion of Baptism previous to the Practice of *John the Baptist*? For how else could they ask him, why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor *Elias*, neither that Prophet?

And are not the Apostle's Words very express *1 Cor.* 10. 1, 2. *Moreover, Brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all pass'd thro' the Sea, and were all baptiz'd unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea.*

Besides, the Texts that speak of Purification by Water do in effect command the Baptism of *Profelites*; for if the Native *Jews* were not pure enough to approach unto God, till thus purify'd, the *Profelites* requir'd a solemn Purification by Water.

2. Another Argument you use is, † That there is no Instance or Mention of this Baptism, in any other authentick ancient History. *Jesephus, Philo, Ganz.* in the Accounts of the *Profelytism* of some, they have mention'd Circumcision, without so much as Glancing at this pretended Baptism.

But, Sir, why must the Silence of these Authors be insisted on, when the *Mischna* is so very express? These only acted the Part of Historians, and 'twas not their Business to take notice of all Customs: 'Twas enough to mention the Circumcision of *Profelites*, because that, as ‡ you observe, was a great Badge of a *Jew*: That also was most contemn'd by other Nations, and therefore 'twas fit to declare, that the *Profelites* submitted to it, and did not think it dishonourable. But, as for Baptism, that was spoke against by none, nor was it the Prerogative of a

Jew; for the *Christians* baptize, and even the *Heathen* had a Sort of Baptism among them: And to what Purpose therefore should these Historians mention the Baptism of their *Profelites*?

3. * You argue from the Apostle's taking no Notice of our Baptism being like that of the *Jews*, but comparing it with the being baptiz'd unto *Moses* in the Cloud and Sea.

This, Sir, according to my Hypothesis, is a Confirmation, that the *Jews* did baptize their *Profelites*; for I derive that Custom from the *Israelites* being baptiz'd unto *Moses*, as you may see in my † *Survey*.

Besides, what Occasion was there for the Apostle to tell the *Christians* of his Age, that our Baptism was like that of the *Jews*, when they had ocular Demonstration of it? 'Twas much more affecting for the Apostle to step several Ages back, because the Scripture had recorded God's punishing them for their Sins, tho' they had also been baptized. And this would caution *Christians* not to trust to the Protection of Baptism, while they went on in Sin.

4. You say, ‡ that several Authors of Reputation, especially the Antients, take no Notice of this *Jewish* Initiation.

I shall not stand to examine the Truth of this; for suppose, Sir, it be so, 'tis nothing to the purpose; for how few of the Antients understood *Hebrew*? And consequently were Strangers to the *Jewish* Books. Or if they had been ever so well acquainted with this *Jewish* Initiation, yet what Occasion had they to mention it in the Writings they have left behind them? How rare a Thing would it be in our Days, for a *Christian* Author to intimate any Thing of this Nature, were it not for the unhappy Controversy of Infant-Baptism? 'Tis sufficient, that the ancient *Jewish* Writers have transmitted this Practice to us; for they cou'd not design to impose on us. 'Tis strange, that the Silence of others must determine this Practice of the *Jews*, against the exprefs Declaration of the *Jews* themselves.

But while you are on this Head, § you charge us with Prejudice, Partiality and Inconsistency, in saying, Baptism was borrow'd from the *Jewish* Initiation, and yet that it succeeds Circumcision.

In my poor Opinion, Sir, 'tis no Inconsistency to say a Practice is borrow'd of one Thing, and succeeds another. The *Jews* have even to this Day a Custom, that, upon solemn

lenn Occasions, the Master of the Family blesses Bread and the Cup, and distributes them to the Family: And from this Custom, the Learned generally conclude, our Saviour borrow'd the Sacrament of his Supper, and yet we say, this Sacrament succeeds that of the Passover. So our present Custom of Fighting with Guns, was borrow'd from the *Germans*; and must we not say therefore, Guns succeed our antient Bows and Arrows?

You farther object, * That suppose the *Jews* from *Moses* to our Saviour's Time, did thus receive their *Profelites* by Baptism, yet it can do no Service to the Cause of Pædo-baptism; for,

1. What Proof is there except from the *Rabbins*, that Infants were so admitted?

This Proof, Sir, is sufficient; for under what Temptation could they lie to deceive us? The Thing also speaks for itself; for if Circumcision and Baptism, were the Initiation of the Parents, why must it be suppos'd, that the Infants were initiated only by Circumcision? They must be impure if their Parents were, and consequently stood in Need of the same Purification by Water.

But you add,

2. That even suppose *Profelites* and their Infants were usually initiated by Baptism; will it therefore follow the *Christian* Baptism must be exactly the same, and administred to the same Persons? By no means. How dangerous and pernicious this Consequence is, appears from the Handle it gives the *Socinians*, *Quakers*, and *Libertines*, to explode the Use of this Sacrament altogether among the Offspring of *Christian* Parents---- Mr. *Wall* takes notice of this Difficulty; but I think he says nothing to evade the Force of it, and only notes that both Sides allow the Necessity of this Sacrament, &c.

You must, Sir, have read Mr. *Wall* too cursorily, or else you could never have said this of him; for in † two Places of his Book, he delivers that which in effect solves this Difficulty. Tho' the *Jews* (says he) nor their Children were baptiz'd, but only *Profelites* under the Law; yet they cannot be exempted now, because in Respect of the *Christian* Religion the *Jews* themselves have the same Need of becoming *Profelites*, and of being baptiz'd, that other Nations have. The Gospel has concluded all under Sin; and St. *Paul*

speak-

speaking of this very Matter of Baptism, says, that in Respect of it, there is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, i. e. there is no Difference between them. The *Jews* themselves do seem to have understood that when the Christ came, their Nation must be baptiz'd as well as others: And therefore they ask'd *John* (who baptiz'd *Jews*) why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor *Elias*? &c.

Thus far Mr. *Wall*. To which let me add, that Dr. *Hammond*, Bishop *Taylor*, Mr. *Walker*, and some others of the Learned, do apprehend, that not only the Children of *Profelites*, born before the *Profelitim* of their Parents, were baptiz'd, but such also as were born afterwards: Nay, that the Children of Native *Jews* were baptiz'd; and if so, your Objection vanishes. But suppose it otherwise; and yet the *Socinians* and other Sectaries can take no Handle from our Way of arguing, because we assert, that our Lord appointed Baptism to succeed Circumcision, and in so doing, has appointed, that all the Infants of *Christians* should be baptiz'd, whatever the Practice was as to *Profelites*.

I wish therefore, you don't rather harden the *Socinians*, &c. in their Contempt of Baptism, by your Denial of Baptism's succeeding Circumcision; for what Argument can so effectually make it out, that Baptism is a standing Sacrament in the Church, as this of Baptism's succeeding Circumcision?

You farther object, that according to the Principles of the *Pædobaptists* themselves, there is no manner of Analogy between this pretended *Jewish* and the *Christian* Pædobaptism: For the *Jews*, they suppose, baptiz'd the Parents together with the Infants born to 'em, before their actual *Profelitim*; but on the contrary, those born to *Christian* Parents before their Conversion to *Christianity*, are accounted an unholy Seed, and not capable of Baptism, as Dr. *Whitby*, and most *Pædobaptists* are of Opinion--- Again, tho' the *Jews* should be allow'd to have baptiz'd the Infant Children of *Profelites*, it no more follows we must do so too, than that we ought to admit 'em to the other Sacrament, because the *Jews* caus'd their Infant Children to eat of the *Paschal Lamb*.

Let such, Sir, answer the former of these Objections, who are affected with it; for the Controversy we are upon is not. If Children are at their Parents Conversion to *Christianity*, come to Years of Discretion, they are not to be baptiz'd by Virtue of their Parents Faith, as is evident from *Mat. 3. 7, 8, 9*. But when he (*John*) saw many of
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the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his Baptism, he said unto them, O Generation of Vipers, who hath warn'd you to flee from the Wrath to come? Bring forth therefore Fruits meet for Repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father.— This Text, I own, excludes Adult Children from being baptiz'd by Virtue of the Parents Faith; but I don't see in Scripture any Thing against the Non-Adult: And this Scruple is, in my Mind, much as reasonable, as if we should deny to give a Person Possession of an Estate, because his Father purchas'd it after he was born.

As to what you say of Infants eating the *Paschal Lamb*; you ought to have turn'd us to some Place of Scripture that requires this. It seems from *Sam. 1. 21, 22, 23.* That *Hannab* did not think *Samuel* was oblig'd to eat the Passover; for how else could she justify her keeping him at Home, when *Elkanah* her Husband, and all his House went up to *Shiloh* to eat the Passover? And the *Jews* generally allow that none were oblig'd to this, till they were Thirteen Years and a Day old.

So that if any Infants did eat of the *Paschal Lamb*, it was not *Quâpaschal*, but as a common Meal, even just, as when any Bread or Wine is left at a Sacrament, it may be given to Children.

3. You say, * whatever might be the Practice of the *Jews*, we need only go back to *St. John's* Baptism, which there is more Reason to think was the Patern of Christ's than a *Jewish* Ceremony, because he was our Saviour's immediate Fore-runner.

This, Sir, is no better than trifling; for even *St. John's* Baptism was borrow'd from the *Jewish* Ceremony you speak of. Nor is there any Thing spoken of *St. John's* Baptism, that can be fairly turn'd against Infant-Baptism; for *Mat. 3. 5, &c. Acts 19. 4.* are to be understood as Pre-requisites only of the Adult.

The *Jews* insisted on much the same Pre-requisites from their Adult *Profelites*, before they would baptize them; but they baptiz'd Infants without such Pre-requisites. And what is there said more in those Texts of Baptism, than is said in *Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 4. 4. Deut. 10. 16. Rom. 4. 11.* of Circumcision? And yet it would be absurd to argue from these Texts, that Infants were not circumcis'd; because they had not the Repentance and Faith which these Texts speak

Speak of. And especially I wonder how any can read *Rom.* 4. 11. where Circumcision is call'd a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith, which Abraham had yet, being uncircumcis'd; and yet exclude Infants from Baptism, because they had not actual Faith. For no Text in the *New Testament*, has that plausible Appearance of Faith's being the essential Term of Baptism, as this for its being such of Circumcision; and yet 'tis plain, Infants were circumcis'd.

4. You say, * in the last Place, to fix the Matter entirely, this Custom of the *Jews* to initiate all *Profelites* and their Children by Baptism, allowing the Fact to be ever so certain, was at best only a traditionary Ceremony from the *Rabbins*--- The *Rabbins* themselves tacitly confess this, in arguing from the legal Washings; and expressly in that very Determination of the Dispute between *Rab. Eliezar*, and *Rab. Joshua*, which our Antagonists constantly quote, in these Words; *But the wise Men pronounc'd, that till he were both circumcis'd and baptis'd, he was not a Profelite*. For this makes it appear, they deriv'd the Practice only from the Authority of their Elders, as may be seen by comparing these Words with *Maimonides's* classical Distributions, particularly his Third and Fifth.

'Tis, Sir, somewhat strange, that you should make the *Rabbins* arguing from the legal Washings, a tacit Confession, that they thought the Baptism of *Profelites* a traditionary Ceremony, when they have expressly declar'd the contrary. You † introduce *Mr. Hill*, as saying too, the *Levitical* Washings answer our Baptism: And must this be interpreted a tacit Confession, that *Mr. Hill* thought our Baptism a traditionary Ceremony?

Nor do your classical Distributions help you out; for pray read *Mr. ‡ Wall's* Answer to *Sir Norton Knatchbull* on this Occasion. Besides, don't the wise Men pronounce the same of Circumcision as of Baptism? And shall I therefore compare this with the classical Distributions, and say the *Rabbins* deriv'd the Practice of Circumcision only from the Authority of the Elders?

Thus, Sir, have I given you my Thoughts of this *Jewish* Baptism, and should now proceed to the Practice of the Primitive Church, but I would not be too tedious, and shall therefore reserve that for my next.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER III.

S I R,

HAVING examin'd in my Last, your Reflections on the *Jewish* Baptism, I propose in this to do the same, as to the Practice of the Primitive Church.

Your Eleventh Letter begins with a long Preamble for and against the Fathers, that you will and you won't admit their Authority: This I guess was done with some Politick Design, perhaps to secure a Retreat, if you saw Occasion. But not to insist on this.

Let us see what you produce from the Fathers.

The first you cite, is St. *Barnabas*; and you are angry with Mr. *Wall* for omitting him.

Pray, Sir, reconcile this with the Animadversion you make on Mr. *Wall*, for citing the spurious Constitutions of the Apostles, * and how (say you) he can make them of any Authority then, I leave his own Conscience to answer. Unhappy Mr. *Wall*! if thou leav'st out St. *Barnabas's* Epistle, which Dr. *Gale* † owns to be spurious, thou art charg'd with being unfair; whereas for citing the Constitutions, thou art tax'd with Unfairness.

But if this, Sir, was criminal in Mr. *Wall*, why did you imitate him? And pretend to impose a Passage as St. *Barnabas's*, which you knew was none of his? Besides, there is nothing in the Passage against Infant-Baptism; for the most you can make of it is, that the Adult are meant there.

But that I may at once answer this, and all other Passages you cite from the Fathers, except *Tertullian*, let me propose to your Consideration,

1. That in those early Days of *Christianity*, Adult Baptism was more common than now, because of the numerous Converts from *Judaism* or *Paganism*.

2. That this pretended Letter of St. *Barnabas*, and all the ancient Letters, Books, and Sermons, were address'd to Persons of riper Years; and is it any Wonder then that the Expressions suit such?

3. May not Expressions of the same Purport with those you bring from the Fathers, be easily collected from our

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Letters, Books, and Sermons? What Minister among us, but may say what you cite from *St. Hermas*? viz. * *And I say unto you all, whatsoever have receiv'd this Seal, keep Simplicity, and remember not Affronts, &c.*

You insinuate, Sir, † That we are at a Loss to know, why Infants are baptiz'd; and you argue strangely about Baptism's Cleansing from Original Sin.

We never, Sir, told you we were at such a Loss; and you may read the important Uses of Infant-Baptism in my ‡ *Survey*. And, as to Original Sin, it may be pardon'd, and yet not eradicated, *Rom. 7. 17.* Now then, (*says the Apostle*) *it is no more I that do it, but Sin that dwelleth in me.* And pray, Sir, are your Votaries perfect after Baptism? Is Sin, as to them, eradicated? If not, why must the Corruptions which Children discover, as they grow up, be made an Argument against Infant-Baptism?

You next present us with what you § call an impregnable Fortrefs of Antipædo-baptism, viz. 1 *Pet. 3. 21.* *The like Figure whereunto Baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

You might, Sir, easily make this Text coincide with Infant-Baptism, if you would but use the same Distinction here, as in *John 3. 5.* and as the Apostle, who was Adult, is one of those spoken of, there is all the Reason in the World, to read the Verse thus, *The like Figure, whereunto Baptism doth also now save us (Adult,) not the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh, &c.*

Besides, what *Dr. Whitby* observes, of *St. Paul's* saying as much of Circumcision, *Rom. 2. 29.* as *St. Peter* does in this Text of Baptism, is very just, and too cogent to be evaded by what you have intimated, viz. But with Submission to the Doctor, I am (say you) of Opinion the Cases are not at all Parallel. For the Baptism which saves is expressly describ'd and limited to be, 1. *Not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh;* but, 2. *The Answer of a good Conscience.* Whereas *St. Paul's* Words do not import that the only Circumcision which sav'd, was, 1. *Not the Circumcision of the Flesh:* But, 2. *The Circumcision of the Heart and Spirit.* Or however, there is certainly this Difference, that *St. Paul* does not speak of Circumcision.

Nor

Nor is there any Room to distinguish between the old and new Dispensation; for the Apostle addresses himself to *Jews*, who had not as yet been told that Circumcision, as to them, was abolish'd, see *Acts* 21. 20, &c. and even on this Occasion the Apostle says, *Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the Law*. So that consider it as it was *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and the Words are of the same Import, as if Circumcision had been then as much in Force as ever.

Besides, the Doctrine the Apostle *Paul* preaches in this Chapter of the Circumcision of the Heart, is but the same which had been preach'd under the old Dispensation, as appears from *Deut.* 10. 16. 30. 6. *Jer.* 4. 4.

The next Scripture you gloss on, is * *Mat.* 19. 14. And you fancy those Children were brought to Christ to be heal'd, or to prevent Possession.

But, Sir, you may equally suppose the same of *Joseph's* having *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 48. 1, 13, 14. I have read of the *Papists* using Holy Water to prevent Possession; but the Scripture is silent as to any being brought to Christ for this Purpose. Nor were they brought to be heal'd; for there is not a Syllable of thier Indisposition, or Cure: And how unnatural would it have been in the Disciples, to be angry with Parents for bringing their sick Children to be cur'd?

But what, Sir, should incline you to put such a Construction as this upon the Design of these Children being brought to Christ? For be the Design of the Parents what it will, our Lord's saying on this Occasion, That of such is the Kingdom of Heaven, does effectually prove what we aim at, *viz.* That the Infants of Professors are in Covenant.

Do you put such a Construction on it to prevent our inferring from this Text, that the Professors in our Lord's Days believ'd Children were capable of Spiritual Blessing? We will excuse you of that Trouble; for we will only refer you to such Texts, as *Luke* 1. 15. 41, 44. where *John the Baptist* is said to be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his Mother's Womb; and to leap there for Joy of Christ.

All that we expect therefore, is, that you would prove, that Christ's Deportment towards these Children, don't evince their being in Covenant. Somewhat of this Nature

you have * attempted, but with what Success I shall now consider.

But tho' (say you) it will be readily allow'd, that Infants are capable of receiving the Kingdom, it can in no wise follow, that this means nothing else but their Fitness to enter into Covenant: This is directly begging the Question. If by Kingdom of Heaven, were meant the Church of Christ, there might indeed be some greater Colour for the Doctor's Way of arguing: But if it means only the Kingdom of Glory, as it plainly does, then the Doctor's Argument is grounded on a Mistake; for tho' Infants are Subjects of the Kingdom of Glory, it will not on that Occasion appear necessary for 'em to be baptiz'd, in order to qualify 'em for that Glory: On the contrary, it rather follows, since as Infants they are Subjects of that Kingdom, they have no need of this Ceremony to give 'em a Right which they have already.----- † Besides, if the Kingdom did mean the Church, how does it appear Infants were to be admitted into it by Baptism? Baptism is the only Way of admitting Adult Persons, but it is no where prescrib'd to Infants. I should rather imagine from the Words, that if Infants are to be admitted at all, by any Ceremony, it must be only by laying on of Hands, and by Prayer; for neither our Lord's Words, nor his Actions, give us Room to think of any other.

These Sir, are your own Words, and the Remarks I make are,

1. That for ought you have said, by the Kingdom of Heaven, may in this Text be meant the Church of Christ. ‡ You refer us indeed to its Parallel, *Mark 10. 15*. And note, that the Church Militant cannot be meant, because of this Sentence, *He shall not enter therein*. But is there not the very same Passage in *John 3. 5*? And yet you make no Scruple to § assert, that the Church Militant is intended there.

And if the Church Militant be also meant here, then 'tis apparent Infants are to be admitted into it by Baptism, for there was but one Way, under the Law, of admitting into the Church both Adult and Infants, and why must there be more under the Gospel? Our Lord's Words and Actions on this Occasion don't intimate, that if Infants are to be admitted at all, by any Ceremony, it must be only by lay-

laying on of Hands, and Prayer; for these Children were not now admitted into the Church, but had been before this, at the Conversion of their Parents, with whom 'tis probable they were baptized. And you might as well have pretended to declare, that the Church of England, don't admit Infants into the Church by Baptism. But, that you rather imagine, that if Infants are admitted at all, by any Ceremony, it must be only by laying on of Hands, and by Prayer; for neither the Bishop's Words at the Confirmation of Children, nor his Actions give us Room to think of any other.

2. That if the Kingdom of Glory be meant in this Text, 'tis you, and not we, Sir, that directly beg the Question; for what Inference can be more natural, than that Infants are Members of Christ's Church on Earth, if they are Heirs of Glory? What! shall Christ own them in Heaven, and shall we disown them in Earth! are they of the Number of that glorious Society at Death, and shall we exclude them from our Society while living? Are not they capable of entering into Covenant with God? *Gen. 17. 7. Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12.* and why should we then treat them as if they were incapable?

3. That I am surpriz'd at these Expressions of yours, *viz.* For tho' the Infants are Subjects of the Kingdom of Glory, it will not on that Occasion appear necessary for 'em to be baptiz'd, in order to qualify them for that Glory: On the contrary, it rather follows, since as Infants they are Subjects of that Kingdom, they have no need of this Ceremony to give 'em a Right which they have already.

I thought Baptism did not give a Right to Glory, but was a Seal affix'd to our previous Right, *Rom. 4. 11.* And what you have, Sir, here advanc'd against Infant-Baptism, is as applicable to Adult-Baptism; for Faith in Christ is the Term of Adult-Baptism: But our Lord says, *John 6. 47. He that believeth on me hath everlasting Life: Ergo,* says the Quaker in your Language, Since as Believers they are Subjects of that Kindom, they have no need of this Ceremony to give 'em a Right which they have already.

Your Twelfth Letter begins thus.

SIR,

THE first Century of Christianity I have already dispatch'd, and am now to examine the Second.

And you please yourself with the Thoughts of *Justin Martyr* being the first of the Ancients, we produce for Infant-Baptism. But I shall give an Answer to this when I come to *Tertullian*. Only at present let me observe, That even this is earlier than you can produce against Infant-Baptism; and therefore so far we have the Advantage of you.

But let us hear the Sentiment of *Justin*.

One Passage you take Notice of is, * That the Holy *Martyr*, arguing against the Ceremonies of the Law, takes Occasion to oppose to the carnal Circumcision, that which is Spiritual; and this, we being Sinners, thro' God's Mercy have receiv'd (says he) by Baptism; and every one is permitted to receive it in the same Way.

From this Passage, Mr. *Wall* ventures to infer, that *Justin* thought Baptism was to *Christians* instead of Circumcision. But you think this Inference very unfair.

To adjust this Matter therefore, Sir, let it be consider'd,

1. That this Passage is much of the same Import with *Col. 2. 11, 12.* the Explication of which I have given in my † *Survey*.

2. The *Martyr* is arguing with *Trypho* a *Jew*, about Circumcision; and to what Purpose is Baptism mention'd on this Occasion, if the *Martyr* did not think it was to *Christians* instead of Circumcision?

There is a great deal of Force in the Words, if we take them as thus, You *Jews* boast of receiving spiritual Circumcision by carnal Circumcision; and tho' we have not this carnal Circumcision, yet we are even with you; for by Baptism we receive spiritual Circumcision: Baptism is that to us, and conveys that to us which you pride yourselves in as to Circumcision.

3. Your first and second Objections against Mr. *Wall*, only prove, that *Justin* don't in this Place call Baptism spiritual Circumcision; but not that *Justin* did not think Baptism was instead of carnal Circumcision. And your Third Objection is in Effect a Proof, that *Justin* and the Primitive Church in general held this Notion of Baptism; for did not they believe the same of Baptism as of Circumcision, that it was a Type of spiritual Circumcision?

But you assert, Sir, ‡ that if Baptism succeeds to us instead of Circumcision; yet this don't affect Infant-Baptism: for,

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1. Infants were order'd to be circumciz'd under the Law ; but were not order'd to be bapriz'd under the Gospel.

2. That if Infants must be bapriz'd, because they were circumciz'd, and Baptism succeeds Circumcision, so it equally follows that Infants must be bapriz'd on the Eighth Day, and Women must not be bapriz'd.

As to the former of these Objections ; if the Infants of Professors are Disciples, as we conclude them to be, then *Mat. 28. 19.* is an Express Order to baptize them. Besides, as they were once order'd to have the initiating Seal, and the *New Testament* has not repeal'd this Order, 'tis as much in Force as ever, and the Silence of the *New Testament* which you urge against us, is in this Case, equal to a Command. I think in your Explication of *Mat. 28. 19.* you wou'd illustrate it by referring us to the Extent of Laws ; permit me therefore to transcribe a Passage which I have lately read in *Dr. Ayliffe's Antient and Present State of the University of Oxford*, which may, in my Opinion, answer what you have said there, and here too. The Passage is this : * “ If the King incorporates a College by one Name, “ and afterwards incorporates the same by another Name ; “ such College ought to use their Name according to the Se- “ cond Incorporation; and yet they continue their Possessions, “ Rights and Privileges which they had by the other Name.

To apply this, Christ Jesus once incorporated his Church by the Name of the *Jewish Church*, and afterwards incorporated the same by another Name, *viz. the Christian Church* ; the Church ought to use their Name according to the Second Incorporation ; and yet they continue their Possessions, Rights and Privileges, which they had by the other Name ; except such as are evidently repeal'd by the Second Incorporation, of which Sort it don't appear, the giving the initiating Seal to Infants is to be reckon'd : Nay, there are several Reasons which may incline us to believe, this was not repeal'd by the Second Incorporation, some of which I have hinted in my † *Survey*.

But, besides this Passage of *Dr. Ayliffe's*, let me farther note, that we press the Observance of the Lord's Day, from the Fourth Commandment. And why is this, but because this Day is to the *Christian Church*, what the Seventh was to the *Jewish*, and succeeds that ; and therefore the
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same Law obliges the Observance of the Lord's Day? And as Baptism is the same to the *Christian* Church, as Circumcision to the *Jewish*, and succeeds it, what are the Commands to circumcise, but so many Commands now to baptize? And why may not we press Infant-Baptism from the same Texts? In a Word, suppose Infant-Baptism to be obscurely deliver'd in the *New Testament*: Nay, that the *New Testament* is absolutely silent about it; and yet we have better Authority for Baptizing Infants, than you have for the Subjects of your Baptism; for we write after the fair Pattern of God himself, who gave Infants the initiating Seal; and can appeal to an Order in the *Old Testament*, which we don't find repeal'd in the *New*. But shew us an Order or Instance in either of the Testaments in Favour of your Baptism, *i. e.* of such who, tho' born of *Christian* Parents, had their Baptism defer'd till Adult.

As to your other Objection of the Baptism of Women, and the Eighth Day; I have in my *Survey* given a Solution. And that is a very fair one, which you have intimated; but they'll tell us († say you) the Apostles vary'd in these and such like Particulars, which is Warrant enough for them to do so too. This you wou'd fain evade, by saying, and the Apostles vary'd also in another Particular, *viz.* that whereas Infants were us'd to be circumcis'd, they admitted none but the Adult to Baptism. But, Sir, this Evasion won't do; for 'tis a *Petitio Principii*. We can turn you to *Acts* 8. 12. 16. 15. which expressly declare, the Apostles baptiz'd Women; but you never yet have found that Text of Scripture which intimates, that the Apostles admitted none but the Adult to Baptism.

'Tis true we have not in the *New Testament*, such express Instances of Baptizing Infants, as of Women; but the Reason is, there was not the same Occasion. 'Twas convenient Women should expressly be mention'd, because they had not the former initiating Seal, Circumcision; but as Infants had us'd to be thus initiated, upon the Exchange of the Seal, 'twas sufficient, that no Exclusion of them was mention'd; for that is a tacit Acknowledgment, that their Right to Initiation is continued.

And 'tis observable, that the Scripture is very sparing in express Instances of Infant-Circumcision; for in that solemn and general Circumcision which we read of, *Joshua* 5. tho'

5. tho' no doubt Thousands of Infants were circumcis'd ; yet there is no exprefs Mention of them, but they have one common Name with their Parents. And in the *Old Testament*, I remember but one exprefs Instance of Infant-Circumcision, *viz. Isaac, Gen. 21. 4.* and why then must Persons be so curious, and præemptory, for Instances of Infant-Baptism in the *New Testament*? If there is but one exprefs Instance of Infant-Circumcision in the *Old Testament*, why should it seem strange if there is never an exprefs Instance of Infant-Baptism in the *New*?

You * next attack us with *Justin Martyr's* Silence in his Apology, as to the Baptism of Infants. This you look upon as a formidable Argument; for you twit us with it not only here but in your † first Letter.

This Silence, you say, is strange.

1. Because *Justin* introduces the Account he gives the Emperor of Baptism thus; lest, says he, if I should leave out this, I might seem to deal unfairly in some Part of my Apology.

2. His mentioning Infant-Baptism might have been useful to remove all Suspicions of their Murdering their Children, wherewith they were falsely charg'd.

3. His speaking of Baptism in such Terms as agreed only with the Adult.

The first Reason you assign, Sir, answers itself; for *Justin's* Expressions discover his Design to say as little as possible of Baptism, because the *Heathens* did not reflect on *Christians* for that, and 'twould have been needless therefore, and contrary to his intended Brevity to have mention'd Infant-Baptism.

The same Answer destroys your third Reason: Only let me add, That speaking to an *Heathen*, what little he said of Baptism, should be to inform him how they initiated such *Heathens* as embrac'd *Christianity*.

Your Second Reason is of no Force; for,

1. It supposes that *Justin* must needs hit upon every Argument that comes into *Dr. Gale's* Mind.

2. If *Dr. Gale* had been then living, and suggested this Argument to *Justin*, he probably had not inserted it in his Apology; for the Antients had a shorter, and more affecting Way of answering this Calumny, *viz.* They appeal'd to all that were ever present in their Assemblies, whether

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they could give a single Instance of the *Christians* Murdering their Children. This Argument might shame their Enemies, and fill them with the utmost Confusion: But that which you suggest might perhaps render the *Christians* more suspicious; for the *Heathen* had some Ceremonies preparatory to their slaying their Sacrifices; we read of the Priest of *Jupiter* bringing Oxen and Garlands unto the Gates to be a Sacrifice, *Acts* 14: 13. and in * *Godwin's Roman Antiquities*, we meet with a Ceremony of pouring Wine mix'd with Frankincense, upon the Beast's Head; just before he was slain for Sacrifice; and therefore the mentioning of Infant-Baptism, in this Case, might have been turn'd upon the *Christians* by the *Heathens*, as a Preparative to the Murdering of their Children. Besides, the *Heathens* knew that the *Christians* were themselves baptiz'd, and if this Consideration would not prevent the *Heathen* suspecting them wicked enough to perpetrate such a Crime, why should the Consideration of their Baptizing their Children, make them entertain more charitable Thoughts of them?

† The Passages you cite from *Justin* against Mr. *Wall*, if they don't prove, that the *Christians* of that Age, us'd the Word Regeneration for Baptism, they do however make it appear, that by regenerated they meant such as had been baptiz'd, which is Tantamount. And therefore, where we read in the Ancients of Infants being regenerated, 'tis the same Thing as if they had told us they were baptiz'd.

One Instance of this Nature ‡ you take notice of in *Irenæus*. His Words are, *He* (i. e. Christ) *came to Save all Persons by himself*; all I mean, who by him are regenerated unto God, Infants, and Little Ones, and Children, and Youths, and Elder Persons.

Against this Passage you object,

1. 'Tis a Question whether it be Genuine, because the latter Part of the Chapter, from whence the Words are taken, speaks as if Christ liv'd till above Fifty, and that this Account was receiv'd from St. *John* and other Apostles; whereas in the Beginning of the Chapter, he says, Christ was baptiz'd at Thirty, and enumerates but Three Passovers afterwards.

2. That we have not *Irenæus's* own Words, but only a Translation of 'em, and that very corrupt.

3. That

3. That 'tis a Mistake to think by regenerated is meant baptiz'd.

4. That Infants does not necessarily signify here Young Children not capable of Reason, but may be extended to all under Ten Years, and some of that Age may be capable of Baptism.

As to the former of these Objections; 'Tis not impossible but such an Account of Christ's Age might be receiv'd from St. *John*. See *John* 8. 57. *Thou art not yet Fifty Years old*. Would they have said thus to Christ if they had not thought him pretty near that Age? Besides, let it be consider'd, that he was Thirty when baptiz'd, and was Forty Days in the Wilderness, and compare this with *John* 14. 9. 21. 25. and judge whether Christ was not longer on Earth than the more common Opinion is. Mr. *Dodwell's* Computation, as you observe, varies from that which is more generally receiv'd.

But, you say, *Irenæus* contradicts himself, because in the Beginning of the Chapter, he says, Christ was baptiz'd at Thirty, and enumerates but Three Passovers afterwards.

Petavius's Solution which you take notice of, Sir, has never yet been answer'd, and you ought not to have rejected it without assigning a Reason.

Besides, I have collected more Contradictions than one out of your Book, (which 'tis no Matter to trouble the World with, but you, if you please, may have a Copy of them) and why may not *Irenæus* be guilty of Inadvertency as well as Dr. *Gale*? However, if you won't suppose this, there is this Medium, the Inconsistency may be spurious, and yet this Passage for Infant-Baptism may be genuine.

And this brings me to your Second Objection, *viz.* that we have not *Irenæus's* own Words, but only a Translation of 'em, and that very corrupt.

The Passage, Sir, we are now upon, is very pertinent, and becoming *Irenæus*; nor is there any Colour to suppose it was inserted by another Hand. 'Tis your common Method to evade the Authority of the Fathers, by saying, they are but Translations. But till you can prove in the Passages we bring, the Translators have vary'd from the Original, we have certainly the Advantage of you, who have neither Originals nor Translations of those early Times on your Side. Is it not strange, that all the Translations should favour us? What were there no *Antipædobaptists* then to translate the Fathers? 'Tis unaccountable that

the Versions should thus in general run against you if the Originals did not so too. But, 3. You fancy, that *Irenæus* by regenerated don't mean baptiz'd.

What I have before hinted of *Justin*, is as far as I can observe, true of *Irenæus*, viz. That he never calls any Regenerate, but such as have been baptiz'd. And Two of the Passages you * cite, do especially favour this Observation, viz. His stiling *Mat. 28. 19.* a Commission to regenerate unto God. And speaking of some *Hereticks*, he says, they deny'd the Baptism of Regeneration to God---- You indeed flatter yourself, † that you have met with a Passage to the contrary; but, upon a Scrutiny, 'twill appear, that the Passage is none of *Irenæus's*, but the *Sectaries*, and is only mention'd by him in order to confute it.

As in other Places therefore, *Irenæus* by regenerated means such as have been baptiz'd, there is the greatest Probability, he uses the Word in the same Sense here.

4. You object the Word Infants does not necessarily signify here Young Children not capable of Reason, but may be extended to all under Ten Years, and some of that Age may be capable of Baptism.

But, Sir, 'tis improbable that Infants should extend to Ten Years of Age, because little Ones and Children are mention'd as Stages between Infants and Youths, and so, according to your Account, a Person may be a Parent before he himself deserves the Title of a Child.

Besides, as *Irenæus* has us'd the Word *Indefinitely*, if Dr. *Gale*, will make Infants ascend to Ten Years of Age, we may descend with it as low as we please, and say, a Child of a Week old, may be intended by the Expression: Nay, we have more Reason to do this; for there have been innumerable Instances of such being baptiz'd, by Virtue of their Parents Faith; but what single Instance have we of an Infant not quite Ten Years old baptiz'd, by Virtue of his own Faith? If there were any such Instances in *Irenæus's* Days, they were certainly so rare, that 'twas not worth while to distinguish them from little Ones, they might very well ha' been thrown in'o that Class.

But, finally to determine this Point, you must, Sir, either grant that Infants is to be here taken as we generally use it, or deny that Christ came to save Infants; for *Irenæus* having said Christ came to save all Persons by himself,

adds

adds by Way of Explication; all I mean, who by him are regenerated unto God, Infants, and little Ones, and Children and Youths and Elder Persons.

Upon the Whole therefore, this famous Passage is still a Thorn in your Sides. And pray remember what you have told us, * that *Ireneus* you believe was acquainted with *Polycarp*, who had familiar Converse with *St. John*, and others who had seen the Lord. This is the Man who speaks of Infants as baptiz'd. He was no *African* Bishop, I assure you, but has this Character given him by your old Friend *Tertullian*, † *Ireneus omnium Doctrinarum curiosissimus Explorator*.

You begin your Thirteenth Letter with a Passage of *Polycrates*. But, with Submission, 'tis nothing to this Controversy; for it only denotes his natural Age, and ought to be read with a Parenthesis, *viz. I therefore, Brethren* (who am Sixty Five Years old) *in the Lord*. The Apostle *Phil. i. 14*. uses the very same Phrase for *Christians*.

Besides, if his natural Age had not been intended, what you mention is no Proof of his having *Christian* Parents; for tho' other Branches of the Family were *Christians*, yet it don't follow, the Branch he belong'd to was. And even this Passage, if it did not denote his natural Age, would incline me to guess, he was once an *Heathen*, and relates how many Years he had been converted.

The ‡ next you take Notice of, is *Tertullian*. There are some Expressions of his which render it dubious, whether he was absolutely against Infant-Baptism. But 'tis not worth while to traverse it; for, what Article of the *Christian* Faith, but has had its Opponents? You § mention earlier than this, a Sect that deny'd all Baptism. And if our Age has so many *Antipedobaptists*, what wonder if formerly there was *Tertullian*? Nor is it unhappy for our Times, that *Tertullian* did oppose Infant-Baptism; for, by this the Sentiment, and Practice of the Church of that Age, is more particularly transmitted to us; and we may learn, that they look'd on Infant-Baptism as of Sacred Institution.

This you wou'd evade by saying, ** had it been the settled Practice and Judgment of the Church, and what they thought was supported by the Authority and Tradition of the Apostles, it can't be imagin'd that *Tertullian* should venture

* Page 60. Du Pin. † p. 469. ‡ p. 508. § p. 496. ** p. 510.

ture to oppose it. Or if he did, that he should employ no more Pains to excuse what seem'd to contradict the Doctrine and Practice of the Apostles and the whole Church.

But, Sir, did you never read, that this very Man ventured to desert the Church, and oppos'd her in several Articles? And why might he not give a Specimen of his Temper in the Article we are upon? Nor can you be insensible, that the first Starters of a Notion seldom say so much as their Party afterwards. Dr. Gale is more copious on this Subject than *Tertullian*, thro' the Assistance of many others; but if Dr. Gale, as *Tertullian*, had first advanc'd it, perhaps his Reflections had been as brief.

There are several Things which render it probable, that in *Tertullian's* Time, and the preceding Ages of *Christianity*, Infant-Baptism was the general Practice of the Church, *viz.*

1. *Tertullian*, does not call it a Novelty, nor the Private Opinion of a Sect; but speaks of it as a Thing generally practis'd.

2. None of his Contemporaries, nor Predecessors ever spoke against it, so far as we can learn.

3. *Origen*, his Contemporary, who liv'd in another Part of the World, speaks of Infant-Baptism as the Practice of the Church, and says, the Church had it from the Apostles.

4. Not long after *Tertullian's* Death, *viz.* Anno. Christi 254. Infant-Baptism is spoken of in an *African Synod*, of no less than Sixty Six Bishops, as then generally practis'd.

In a Word, tho' Moderns have presum'd to question the Antiquity of Infant-Baptism, the Antients did not dare to do it. *Pelagius* certainly had a greater Opportunity of doing this, than any now a Days; for he lived above Thirteen Hundred Years ago; and he would gladly have embrac'd such an Opportunity; for he was miserably gall'd with this Objection, what need have Infants of Baptism except they have Original Sin? If he could have us'd the Dialect so common among you, he might easily have silenc'd his Adversaries; but poor Man, tho' he liv'd so vastly nearer the Apostles than you, yet he never understood, that Infant-Baptism was not of Gospel Institution, but an Innovation of some thick-skull'd *Africans*. He was such a Novist in Ancient History, and so unacquainted with the new Discoveries made by our *Antipædobaptists*, that

that he, like an *Ignoramus*, says, * he was not against Infant-Baptism, nor he never heard, no not even any impious *Hæretick* or *Sectary* that was. And who is there so Ignorant as to deny Infant-Baptism? Or who can be so impious as to hinder Infants from being baptiz'd? How very different is this Stile of *Pelagius* from that of many Authors in our Age! and how happy was the Church then, to have no *Dissenters* in this Point of Infant-Baptism! how much Heat had been avoided! how much Time might better have been improv'd, if till this Day *Christians* had known nothing of this Controversy! to which I may add, how many Texts of Scripture had then escap'd the Construction is now put upon them! particularly the 1 *Cor.* 7. 14.----*Else were your Children Unclean; but now are they Holy.* What but an *Hypothesis* could insinuate, that the Legitimacy of Children is here meant, and not their Fæderal Holiness? And yet this Construction you undertake to † defend.

In order to come at the true Sense of this Text, it must be consider'd, that, as the Beginning of this Chapter informs us, several Cases of Conscience had been sent by the Church of *Corinth* to the Apostle for his Resolution; and in this and the following Chapters they are resolv'd. One of these Cases seems to be, whether if of a marry'd Couple, the one embrac'd *Christianity* and the other did not, the *Christian* might cohabit with the other and not be spiritually defil'd and render'd unfit for Gospel-Ordinances? Now the Text we are upon contains the Argument which the Apostle uses to resolve this Case. *For the unbelieving Husband* (says he) *is sanctify'd by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctify'd by the Husband: Else were your Children Unclean; but now are they Holy.*

If these last Words are to be understood in your Sense, I don't see how they affect the Case; for, what Coherence has the Legitimacy of the Children with the Spiritual Purity of the Parents? The Children may be legitimate, and yet the Parents impure and unfit for Gospel Ordinances.

Besides, if the Legitimacy of Children were here meant, the Apostle would never have wrapt up his Mind in such Ænigmatical Terms, as *Unclean* and *Holy*: Terms never taken in any such Sense in the *Old* nor *New Testament*; but would have express'd himself in the same common and easy

* *Wall*, Page 299. † p. 515, 516.

fy Terms, as Heb. 12. 18. *But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons.*

These Considerations are sufficient to discard your Sense of this Text, whereas ours is confirm'd by both these; for according to our Sense the Apostle's Argument runs thus, Do not you *Christian* Parents look upon your Children as Holy *i. e.* in Covenant, notwithstanding one of the Parents be an *Heathen*? And if Children thus descended, are in this Sense Holy, and are not made Unclean by the *Heathen* Parent, consequently the *Christian* Wife or Husband, who partakes of less of the Nature of the *Heathen* Consort than the Child does, cannot by such a Relation be made Unclean, or deem'd out of Covenant, or unfit for Gospel Ordinances: But rather, *the unbelieving Husband is sanctify'd by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctify'd by the Husband, i. e.* in some Sense, such a Person, for the sake of their Relation, may be said to be in Covenant; at least so far, as not to hinder the Conveyance of Fæderal Holiness to their Children.

To illustrate this Matter: If one of the Royal Family matches with a Person of a common Extract, the former does not hereupon descend, but the latter ascends, and is in some Sense made one of the Royal Family; especially in this, That the Children of such are equally Heirs Apparent to the Crown, as if both Parents were Originally or by Extract of the Royal Family.

As in this Case the Royal Person does, if I may so speak, Royalize the Consort; *even so the unbelieving Husband is sanctify'd by the Wife, and the Wife by the Husband.* And as the Children of such a Royal Pair are accounted of the Royal Family, and enjoy the High Privileges of it; even so the Children, where one of the Parents is a *Christian*, are not Unclean, but Holy, *i. e.* not out of Covenant, but in Covenant, and are to enjoy the High Privileges of it.

By this Time, I hope, you see how natural and easy the Construction we put upon this Text is; and not only the Topick the Apostle is upon confirms our Construction, but we can turn you to other Texts of Scripture which use the Terms Unclean and Holy to express Persons in or out of Covenant. Read *Isa. 52. 1. Acts 10. 28. Deut. 7. 6. Deut. 14. 2, 21.*

Nor does what you object on this Occasion make against our Construction; for tho' seminal Holiness is not meant in the former Part of the Verse, yet it may in the latter.

You

You might as well pretend, that *Acts* 22. 28. seminal Freedom is not meant in the latter Part of the Verse, because 'tis not so in the former.

And as to the Baptizing of such Children whose Parents are neither of them *Christians*, this Text don't meddle with it, but only determines what is to be done where only One of the Parents is a *Christian*. 'Tis evident indeed from this Text, that where both the Parents are *Heathens*, the Children by Descent are Unclean; but if these, during their Minority, are adopted by *Christians*, as was the Case of such whom you speak of as circumcis'd under the Law, they may by Virtue of their new Relation, be accounted Holy, and be baptiz'd.

I shall close my Thoughts of this Text with observing, that it seems to intimate, that Infant-Baptism was then generally known. For the Apostle, in order to remove their Scruple of Cohabitation with Unbelievers, refers them to their Children being in Covenant; which shews, that this was a Thing they were fully satisfy'd of: And which way should they have this Satisfaction, except their Infants were baptiz'd? 'Tis easily accounted for this Way; but what other Way can you account for it?

The next of the Fathers, I shall take notice of, is *Origen*. And * you confess, Sir, that the Passages cited out of his Works are very full and plain Testimonies for Infant-Baptism: But they are not you think to be depended on, because not from the Original, but *Ruffinus's* Translation, which is very corrupt.

This Objection, Sir, as Mr. *Wall* has observ'd, is lame; for *Ruffinus* lay under no Temptation to insert these Passages. Besides, that one of them was in the Original there is no doubt, *viz.* that in *Origen's Commentaries on St. Luke*; for *Hierom* has translated that as *Origen's*; and *Ruffinus* and he wou'd never have conspir'd to impose upon the World. And this Passage thus appearing to be genuine, renders it probable, that the rest are the same. And, as I have already hinted, Passages from the corruptest Versions, are of a greater Force than the absolute Silence of both Originals and Versions. In a Word, 'tis a Sign, that either these Passages are fairly translated, or there were no *Antipædobaptists* in *Ruffinus's* Age; for otherwise they would have been particularly noted and remonstrated against.

I now proceed to observe what you say of *Cyprian*.

You * grant, that he speaks plainly enough of Infant-Baptism, as practis'd in *Africa* in his Time.

But you object,

1. *Cyprian* speaks as plainly of Infant-Communion.

2. The *Africans* were generally Men of weak Intellectuals.

3. The *Greek Churches* seem very plainly to have been at that Time of another Opinion. For *Dionysius*, the illustrious Bishop of *Alexandria*, in an Epistle to *Dionysius* a Presbyter, and afterwards Bishop of *Rome*, concerning *Novatian*, says, he utterly disallows of Holy Baptism, and subverts the Faith and Profession which goes before it.

But, Sir, as to your first Objection; our present Business is not, whether the Primitive Church made Innovations; but whether Infants were then baptiz'd. And as you grant the latter, we are not solicitous about the former; for we don't baptize Infants meerly because the Ancients did; but because in this Instance they copy'd after God's Word.

Your Second Objection is very severe, and what you are more concerned with than we; for, as I have shown, we have others to appeal to besides *Africans*: But *Tertullian*, the only Man of the earliest Ages that wrote against Infant-Baptism, was an *African*, and, as *Du Pin* † observes, vastly inferior to *Cyprian*. The Characters (says he) of these Two Authors, are exceeding different. *Tertullian* is harsh and obscure; *St. Cyprian* is polite and clear; *Tertullian* is hot and fiery; *St. Cyprian*, tho' he does not want all necessary Force upon Occasion that requires it, is soft and gentle: *Tertullian* reproaches his Adversaries, and insults over them in a bitter railing Manner; *St. Cyprian* is infinitely more moderate, and if he is obliged at any Time to speak some Truths that displease them, he takes care to soften them by the Agreeableness of his Narration: *Tertullian* vents abundance of false Reasons, and teaches several Errors; on the contrary, *St. Cyprian* argues almost every where with a world of Justice and Solidity-----

Pray, Sir, for your Comfort view these Characters; especially the last Part which is certainly *Tertullian's*, viz. he vents abundance of false Reasons: ‡ We have an Instance of this in his Discourse against Infant-Baptism; for, pretending to answer the Argument brought from *Mark* 10. 13, 14. he thus

* Page 528. † Vol. 1. *Eccl. Hist.* p. 142. ‡ *Du Pin*, p. 80.

thus expresses himself, *Jesus Christ says, indeed, Hinder not little Children from coming to me; but that they should come to him as soon as they were advanc'd in Years, as soon as they have learnt their Religion, when they may be taught whether they are going, when they are become Christians, when they begin to be able to know Jesus Christ.*

Was ever such a trifling contradictory Gloss put upon a Text? How can they come, while little Children, to Christ, if they must tarry till they are grown up before they come? And the little Children here spoken of were so little, that Christ took them up in his Arms, *Mark 10. 16.* And they are called Infants, *Luke 18. 15.*

Thus exact in his Ratiocination was the first Opposer of Infant-Baptism.

Your Third Objection is a meer Fancy; for the Passage of *Dionysius* was concerning *Novatian*, who of an *Heathen* Philosopher, turn'd *Christian*, and was baptiz'd when Adult; and therefore 'twas necessary for *Dionysius* to say on this Occasion, he utterly disallows of Holy Baptism, and subverts the Faith and Profession which goes before it. Who of us but in such a Case, would have thus express'd our selves? And why then must you infer from hence, that the *Greek* Churches seem very plainly to have been at that Time of another Opinion than the *African* Churches, who were so unanimous for Infant-Baptism? How, Sir, can you possibly suppose this either of the *Greek* Churches, or any other Churches in the World, since we never meet with any Debates that the *African* Churches were engag'd in with other Churches on this Account, nor any Protestation entered against them? What a Noise, Schism, and Confusion, did the Time of keeping *Easter* create between the *East* and *Western* Churches? And could the *African* Churches differ from all the rest in the World, and escape Animadversion? There were certainly no *Antipædobaptists* in those Days, or else their Temper was quite different from ours. Ours are many of them so positive in this Controversy, as to unchurch all that differ from them: And of such forward Martial Souls, as that a diminutive Fellow of scarce common Sense, shall challenge a Person of the brightest Parts. And what! when all the World was on one Side, and only a few raw undisciplin'd *Africans* on the other, was there not a *Danvers!* *Stennet!* nor *Gale!* to draw a Pen in this Cause! But all tamely look'd on while these *Africans* rode in Triumph, and drag'd the World at their Chariot Wheels!

And now, Sir, I have trac'd you to your Close, where you tell your Friend, * “ Before I conclude, Sir, I must just take Notice of one Thing I remember you were us'd frequently to object, *viz.* That we are not able to assign the Time when Infant-Baptism first commenc'd; and that it must seem mighty strange, and indeed improbable to such as reflect upon the great Piety and Sincerity of the early Centuries of the Church, that an Innovation of this Nature shou'd ever be in the least attempted, and much more that it should prevail so far, and be so generally own'd and defended; and all so early as even we ourselves acknowledge it was. But, Sir, I must beg you to consider,

- “ 1. That very many Errors of as gross a Kind were as soon started, and as generally receiv'd as the Baptizing of Infants.

- “ 2. You are not to imagine this Practice was establish'd altogether, and at once, in as great a Latitude as it is at present.

- “ 3. Lastly, that very Piety and Zeal you mention as a Security against this Innovation, in reality tended very much to betray 'em into it.

These, Sir, are the Things you beg your Friend to consider, in order to remove the Difficulties he had started; but, with Submission, I conclude, you have not satisfy'd him. For, Consideration will present him with some such Queries, as,

1. How can Dr. *Gale* assert, that very many Errors of as gross a Kind were as soon started, and as generally receiv'd as the Baptizing of Infants; when he owns he is not able to assign the Time when Infant-Baptism first commenc'd; nor has he from the Scriptures, or the most ancient Writers, assign'd a Time, since the Institution of Baptism, when Infants were not baptiz'd?

2. Why may it not be imagin'd, that Infant-Baptism was establish'd altogether, and at once, in as great a Latitude as it is at present; since Dr. *Gale* cannot give an authentick History of its gradual Increase, and the Records of the earliest Times mention but one *Antipædobaptist*, *Tertullian*; whereas our Age has several Congregations of them?

3. Whether, as Dr. *Gale* cannot assign the Time when Infant-Baptism first commenc'd; nor the Time when it

was

was not an Ordinance in the *Christian* Church, his Account of its being introduc'd, is to be depended on; especially when it is such as represents Piety and Zeal, as Things tending very much to betray Persons into Errors?

These Things, Sir, together with what else I have said in my Letters, do evince, that your Conjectures about the Original of Infant-Baptism are unwarranted.

Permit me, Sir, to conclude this Discourse with my Thoughts of the Original of *Antipodobaptism*.

The first *Antipodobaptist* we meet with in the World, is *Tertullian*. And he seems to have been betray'd into it by the strange Notion he had of Sin committed after Baptism, *viz.* That they were scarce pardonable; for such a Notion as this must tempt Persons to deser Baptism, and incline them rather to neglect a Command of Christ's, than expose the Salvation of their dear Offspring. We may guess what a powerful Influence this had upon *Tertullian*, by an Instance of much the same Nature in our Days, I mean that of many sincere but doubting *Christians*, absenting themselves from the Lord's Table. They are sensible the Command is express, *Luke 22. 19. This do in Remembrance of me.* But they are scar'd from their Duty by the false and severe Interpretation they put on *1 Cor. 11. 29.* for they fancy unworthy Communicating is an unpardonable Sin, and they must needs be damn'd. And therefore they think it more eligible to absent themselves from the Lord's Table, than damn their Souls by their Presence. They hope God will either, excuse their Absence, because of their Unworthiness; or at least their Punishment for being absent will be less, than if they approach that Sacred Ordinance unworthily. Thus do these *Christians* terrify themselves, and Year after Year omit an Ordinance they would be welcome to; and which they would not dare to omit, were it not for their unhappy Mistakes about this Text. Could they but once read it in the same Sense as the Apostle writ it, they would be less shy of this Ordinance, and spend that Time in Preparation for it, which they now wast in sinful Fears and Scruples. The Apostle don't call that Eating and Drinking unworthily, which they do; nor threaten the Punishment of this Sin, which they suppose.

'Tis evident from the *28 v.* that none who sincerely and to their best Endeavours prepare themselves, tho' alas! 'tis very imperfect, do in the Apostle's Sense eat and drink unworthily. The weaker any sincere Believer is, the more need

need he stands in of this strengthening Ordinance. And 'tis ridiculous to say you will tarry till you are stronger before you come to that Ordinance which was appointed to strengthen you. Nor does the Apostle threaten the unworthy Communicants with that severe Punishment, which these timorous *Christians* suppose; for the Apostle's Expressions, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*, cannot possibly mean, that such Persons shall certainly be damn'd; for his *Corinthians*, to whom he was now addressing his Discourse, were many of them unworthy Communicants; as appears from 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, v. and yet at 28 v. he invites them to the Lord's Table; only he would have them first examine themselves, and take heed for the future not to communicate unworthily. And would the Apostle ever have thus caution'd and invited them again to the Lord's Table, if unworthy Communicants would certainly be damn'd? All that the Apostle therefore intended by this Text was, to represent unworthy Communion as a very heinous Sin, a Sin which provok'd God to inflict Temporal Punishments; as at 30 v. and if not repented of, wou'd make our Damnation in Hell the greater.

But, Sir, I must beg your Pardon for this Digression which I was led into by *Tertullian*, and which I could not dispatch in fewer Words, because I would fain remove this Obstacle which too many sincere *Christians* have thrown in the Way to the Lord's Table.

To return now to the Subject. Another Principle which introduc'd *Antipædobaptism* might be that which the *Papists* readily embrace, *viz.* resting in *Opere Operato*, i. e. ascribing too much to the external Performance of Ordinances. And I should be glad if this Principle was peculiar to the Church of *Rome*, for I am afraid too many *Protestants* acquiesce in it; especially as to the Participation of the Lord's Supper; for how common is it for Persons to lead a carnal sensual Course of Life, and, at the Approach of their last Moments, send for the Minister, and receive the Sacrament as their *Viaticum* for Heaven, and so flatter themselves they have made their Peace with God, and secur'd eternal Happiness. But it will be well for many such Communicants, if their Plea meet with a softer Reply, than that *Luke* 13. 26, 27. *Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in thy Presence---- But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.*

What

What these Persons have done with this Sacrament, others, I fear, have done with Baptism; they have defer'd it as long as they could, that it might be their *Viaticum* at last, and they were willing their Children should take the same Advantage: But, in my Opinion, it would have been of greater Advantage to them and theirs, to have perus'd more carefully such Texts, as *Acts* 22. 16. *1 Pet.* 3. 21. and not delay'd the Lifting themselves or their Children under Christ's Banner, till just as Death was ready to make them quit the Field, and render them incapable of engaging in Christ's Cause.

Others have been drawn into *Antipædobaptism*, because they could not reconcile the Baptism of Infants and their Original Purity. *Pelagius* indeed held both, and so to this Day do some of his Followers; but others have cut the Gordian Knot. One Mr. *Bows*, (at the End of the Introduction to the *Portsmouth* Disputation) declares, that if he could believe our Doctrine of Original Sin, he should think Infants had need of Baptism.

Others have embrac'd *Antipædobaptism*, because when they have in Sacred or other History, read of Adult Baptism, they have not consider'd, that such Instances were of Converts from *Judaism* or *Ethnicism*. And that the Scripture's Silence, as to the Adult-Baptism of Persons descended from *Christians*, is an Argument that such were baptiz'd in their Infancy.

I shall name but one Thing more as the Original of *Antipædobaptism*, viz. the not distinguishing between the Terms of Baptism in Adult and Infants: whereas 'tis plain, they were different as to Circumcision.

I am, Sir, &c.

F I N I S.

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Practical Discourses upon Reading the Scriptures. Preach'd at the *Friday* Evening Lecture at the *Weigh-House* in *Eastcheap*. By several Ministers.

A Sermon on Occasion of the Death of the late Sir *Arthur Langford*, Bar. Preach'd at *Woolwich* in *Dublin*, April 8. 1716. By the Reverend *J. Boyse*.











